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General Assembly

Seventy-third session

Official Records

6th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 25 September 2018, 9 a.m.
New York

President: Ms. Espinosa Garcés. . . . . (Ecuador)

The meeting was called to order at 9 a.m.

Tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Before we proceed to consider the item on our agenda for this morning, I would like to invite members to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, the seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations, who passed away on 18 August 2018.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

Agenda item 112

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/73/1)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the decision taken at its 3rd plenary meeting, on 21 September 2018, the General Assembly will hear a presentation by the Secretary-General of his annual report on the work of the Organization (A/73/1), under agenda item 112.

I give the floor to the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General: Our world is suffering from a bad case of trust deficit disorder. People are feeling troubled and insecure, and trust is at a breaking point — trust in national institutions, trust among States and trust in the rules-based global order. Within countries, people are losing faith in political establishments, polarization is on the rise and populism is on the march. Among countries, cooperation is less certain and more difficult, and the divisions in the Security Council are stark. Trust in global governance is also fragile, as twenty-first-century challenges outpace twentieth-century institutions and mindsets.

We have never had a true system of global governance, much less a fully democratic one. Still, over many decades, we have established solid foundations for international cooperation. We came together as the United Nations to build institutions, norms and rules to advance our shared interests. We have raised the standards of living of millions. We have forged peace in troubled lands and, indeed, we have avoided a third world war. But none of that can be taken for granted.

Today, the world order is increasingly chaotic. Power relations are less clear and universal values are being eroded. Democratic principles are under siege and the rule of law is being undermined. Impunity is on the rise, as leaders and States push the boundaries both at home and in the international arena. We face a set of paradoxes. The world is more connected, yet societies are becoming more fragmented. Challenges are growing outward, while many people are turning inward. And multilateralism is under fire precisely when we need it most.

It is true that we are moving in the direction of a multipolar world, but multipolarity will not in itself guarantee peace or solve global problems. A century ago, Europe was multipolar. The balance of power

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was deemed sufficient to keep rivals in check. It was not. Without strong multilateral frameworks for Europe-wide cooperation and problem-solving, the result was a grievous world war. Today, with shifts in the balance of power, the risk of confrontation may increase.

In assessing the Peloponnesian War in ancient Greece, Thucydides said, "It was the rise of Athens and the fear that this instilled in Sparta that made war inevitable." That is what the political scientist Graham Allison calls the "Thucydides trap". But in his book *Destined for War*, reviewing many examples of rivalry in the past, he concluded that conflict is never inevitable. Indeed, with leadership committed to strategic cooperation and to managing competing interests, we can avoid war and steer the world onto a safer path.

Individual leaders have the duty to advance the well-being of their people, but it runs deeper. Together, as guardians of the common good, we also have a duty to promote and support a reformed, reinvigorated and strengthened multilateral system. We need commitment to a rules-based order, with the United Nations at its centre and with the various institutions and treaties that bring the Charter of the United Nations to life. We need to show the added value of international cooperation by delivering peace, defending human rights and driving economic and social progress for women and men everywhere. That is why I am so committed to reform, and to making the United Nations more effective in responding to the needs and aspirations of "We the peoples". In the face of massive existential threats to people and the planet, but equally at a time of compelling opportunities for shared prosperity, there is no way forward but through collective, common-sense action for the common good. That is how we can rebuild trust.

In my address last year (see A/72/PV.3), I highlighted seven challenges. One year later, they remain sadly unresolved. There is outrage at our inability to end the wars in Syria, Yemen and elsewhere. The Rohingya people remain exiled and traumatized in misery, still yearning for safety and justice. Palestinians and Israelis are still locked in endless conflict, with a two-State solution ever more distant. The threat of terror looms, fed by the root causes of radicalization and violent extremism, and terrorism is ever more interlinked with international organized crime and the trafficking of people, drugs and arms, and with corruption. The nuclear peril has not eased, with non-proliferation at serious risk. Nuclear-weapon States are modernizing their arsenals. A new arms race could be triggered and the threshold for their use lowered. We have seen the outrageous use of chemical weapons with full impunity, despite their ban. Protections against dangerous biological weapons are weak.

Inequality is undermining faith in the social contract and is a clear obstacle to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Tensions over trade are on the rise. Migrants and refugees continue to face discrimination and demagoguery in the context of clearly insufficient international cooperation. And as we mark the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the human rights agenda is losing ground and authoritarianism is on the rise. As the politics of pessimism spreads, we must guard against self-fulfilling prophecies. Those who see their neighbours as dangerous might create a threat where there was none. Those who close their borders to regular migration only fuel the work of traffickers, and those who ignore human rights in combating terrorism tend to breed the very extremism that they are trying to end.

(*spoke in Spanish*)

We have an obligation to change this course and tackle the challenges facing us. We must act based on facts, not out of fear, and we must rely on reason, not delusions. Our work must focus on prevention. This session of the General Assembly presents us with a unique opportunity to move forward. To give just one example, I want to welcome the firm support that has been shown for my Action for Peacekeeping initiative, which has been endorsed by 148 States and organizations. Its goal is to help our missions succeed in unstable and long-term situations. Today, however, I want to focus on two major challenges that over the past year have become exceedingly urgent — climate change and new risks related to advances in technology. Let me discuss each of them in turn.

(*spoke in French*)

Let us first consider something that constitutes a direct threat to our existence — climate change. We are at a pivotal moment. If we do not change course in the next two years, we risk losing control of the situation. Climate change is occurring at a faster pace than we can keep up with and is provoking loud calls for help all over the world. According to the World Meteorological Organization, the past two decades have included 18 of the warmest years since such data began to be recorded,

in 1850. A few weeks ago, the ultra-thick and reputedly ultra-solid Greenland ice sheet in the northern part of the country began to crack for the first time. The concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is at its highest level in 3 million years, and it is only increasing. What is worse is that, as world leaders, our actions have not been up to the challenge. We must listen to our eminent world scientists. We must face reality head-on, and we must be more ambitious and do more to show that we take the urgency of the situation seriously. We must ensure the implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which has immense potential for putting us on the right track but whose goals are far from being achieved, although they represent only the bare minimum required to avoid the worst fallout from climate change.

I am concerned about the fact that the recent Bangkok climate talks on guidelines for the implementation of the Agreement were concluded without making sufficient progress. The next Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Poland in December, will be decisive. It is absolutely crucial to ensure that it succeeds. As I said recently, the disagreements among Member States that paralysed us in Copenhagen cannot be repeated in Katowice. Fortunately, the evolution of technology is our ally. Green energy is more competitive than ever. If we commit to the right path, climate action could produce an additional $26 billion for the global economy from now until 2030. Green-economy policies could create 24 million jobs. More and more businesses and investors are finding that the green economy is profitable. Far from threatening the foundations of the economy, climate action creates new industries, new markets and additional jobs, while reducing reliance on fossil fuels. It is inaction, not action, that puts the economy in danger.

Governments must demonstrate wisdom and courage. That means ending multi-billion-dollar subsidies for fossil fuels, putting a fair price on carbon emissions and ending investments in unsustainable infrastructure that will perpetuate harmful practices for decades to come. Our future is at stake. Climate change spares nothing and can shake the entire world. If we are to ensure global prosperity and the security of nations, it is essential to maintain global warming well below 2°C. That is why in September 2019 I will convene a climate change summit to rally efforts and stimulate funding. It will provide an opportunity to bring together States, cities and actors in the real economy, along with the decision-makers, businesses, financial community and representatives of civil society, to focus on the heart of the problem. The summit will be held one year before the review of every State's commitments under the Paris Agreement, and those commitments will have to be taken further. We need to be more ambitious than ever, and leaders and partners will have the opportunity to demonstrate that ambition at the summit. For that to be possible, we must act today. The world needs all of us to be champions of climate action.

(*spoke in English*)

Let me now turn to new technologies and to what we can do to uphold their promise while keeping their perils at bay. And there is indeed great promise. Scientific progress has helped cure deadly diseases, feed growing populations, drive economic growth and connect businesses, communities, families and friends across the world. Rapidly developing fields such as artificial intelligence, blockchain technology and biotechnology have the potential to turbocharge progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Artificial intelligence is connecting people across languages and supporting doctors in making better diagnoses. Driverless vehicles will revolutionize transportation. But there are also risks and serious dangers. Technological advances may disrupt labour markets as traditional jobs change or disappear, even as the number of young job-seekers continues to grow. Retraining will be needed at previously unimaginable levels. Education must adapt from the earliest grades. The very nature of work will change. Governments may have to consider stronger safety nets and eventually universal basic income.

At the same time, technology is being misused by terrorists and for sexual exploitation and abuse. Organized criminal networks lurk on the dark web, profiting from encryption and near-anonymous cryptocurrency payments to traffic in people and illegal goods. Some reports estimate that cybercrime is now putting $1.5 trillion in the pockets of cybercriminals annually. Malicious acts in cyberspace — such as disinformation campaigns — are polarizing communities and diminishing trust among States. And more and more people are getting their information from news or social media feeds that echo their views, reinforce tribalism and assure people that they are right and the other side is wrong.

The digital revolution is also being used to discriminate against women and reinforce our male-dominated culture. Indeed, there is a deep gender gap in access to digital technologies, widening the digital divide. We must dismantle obstacles and create opportunities for women, ensure equality and change online and toxic corporate cultures. The technology sector must open up and become more diverse — not least for its own benefit.

With technology outpacing institutions, cooperation between countries and among stakeholders will be crucial, including Member States, the private sector, research centres, civil society and academia. There are many mutually beneficial solutions to digital challenges. We urgently need to find a way to apply them. At the United Nations, we are harnessing technologies in support of the Sustainable Development Goals. We are creating innovation labs, including in my Office. And in July, I established a High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation, which met yesterday and which is a dialogue platform for all key actors.

The impacts of new technologies on warfare are a direct threat to our common responsibility to guarantee peace and security. The weaponization of artificial intelligence is a growing concern. The prospect of weapons that can select and attack a target on their own raises multiple alarms and could trigger new arms races. The diminished oversight of weapons has implications for our efforts to contain threats, prevent escalation and adhere to international humanitarian law and human rights law. Let us call it as it is. The prospect of machines with the discretion and power to take human life is morally repugnant. Heaven forbid, a new war could very well include a massive cyberattack that targets not only military capacities, but also critical civilian infrastructure.

I am encouraged by the 10 possible guiding principles elaborated in Geneva last month by the Group of Governmental Experts on lethal autonomous weapons systems. More work on those issues, aimed at building trust between and within nations, will be needed if we are to ensure the responsible use of new technologies. I urge you to use the United Nations as a platform to draw global attention to such crucial matters and to nurture a digital future that is safe and beneficial for all.

Despite the chaos and confusion in our world, I also see winds of hope blowing around the globe. Just days ago, I witnessed the signing of a historic peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea in Saudi Arabia. Soon after, the Presidents of Djibouti and Eritrea met in Jeddah to launch a peace process. Eritrea and Somalia have established diplomatic relations. And in the same region, in the context of a summit of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the two rival leaders in South Sudan finally signed a peace agreement. I am hopeful that those efforts will continue to be consolidated so that the people of the Horn of Africa can finally turn the page on war and conflict.

The courageous initiative of the Singapore summit between the leaders of the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, along with the recent meeting of the two Korean leaders in Pyongyang, offers hope for the possibility of a full and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula in a context of regional security.

During my recent visit to Colombia, I was impressed by the people's strong commitment to peace, now reaffirmed by President Duque Márquez. In Central Asia, I personally witnessed strengthened cooperation among States after Uzbekistan went through a peaceful political transition. Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have taken a major step towards resolving their differences. Our peacekeeping mission in Liberia ended a decade and a half of work this year following the country's first peaceful democratic transition, adding to peacekeeping successes elsewhere in West Africa. The approval of a compact on refugees and another on migration represents a sign of hope, even if there is still a long way to go to reconcile full respect for the rights of people on the move with the legitimate interests of States.

Hundreds of millions of people have been lifted out of extreme poverty across the world over the past three decades, and we averted looming famine in four countries that had been impacted in the past two years. Armenia's young people were at the heart of that country's peaceful political transition earlier this year — showing the potential of youth to use their voice to advance democracy. And the drive for gender equality is gaining ground, amid a growing awareness of pervasive discrimination against women and girls, from violence, harassment and exploitation to unequal pay and exclusion from decision-making. The United Nations must lead the way in pursuit of gender equality. For the first time in United Nations history, there is full gender parity in our Senior Management Group and

among Resident Coordinators leading country teams around the world. We are firmly committed to equality and empowerment everywhere.

As our late Secretary-General Kofi Annan once reminded us:

> "We share a common destiny. We can master it only if we face it together. And that, my friends, is why we have the United Nations." (*see SG/SM/7262*)

Our future rests on solidarity. We must repair broken trust. We must reinvigorate our multilateral project. And we must uphold dignity for one and all.

Agenda item 8

General debate

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): It is a genuine honour for me to welcome everyone to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session. I welcome everyone to the only place where a meeting of this kind is possible. Only the General Assembly, as the main deliberative and representative body of the United Nations, offers to all of the peoples and leaders of the world the opportunity to hear and be heard on an equal footing.

The contribution made by the United Nations to humankind has been immense. International law, the promotion of peace, human rights, protection standards for the environment, the Sustainable Development Goals and those pre-eminent principles that govern international coexistence were born in the General Assembly.

The reality is that the work of the United Nations is as relevant today as it was 73 years ago. Multilateralism is the only viable response to the global problems that we face. To undermine multilateralism or to cast doubt upon its merits will only lead to instability and division, to mistrust and polarization. Around the world, millions of people are suffering from violence, war and want, and from the effects of climate change. For those millions of human beings, uncertainty and fear are their daily lot. Inequality has deprived many societies of hope and opportunity. Those crushed dreams and that lack of any hope for the future is being exploited by some to further divide our communities, stirring up racism, xenophobia and violence, which represent the very antithesis of the purpose of the Charter that we adopted in 1945.

No one can be indifferent to human suffering. Wars and conflicts, as well as economic crises and environmental degradation, affect us all without distinction. We live in an interconnected world, which obliges us to sustain global dialogue and a multilateral response. That is why I have proposed that we return to the multilateral agenda with a renewed commitment based on three principles: global leadership, shared responsibilities and collective action.

Global leadership is necessary in order to identify common solutions to global problems and take appropriate and timely decisions. We need shared responsibility because we all have a common commitment to ensure social cohesion and human dignity, as well as the health of the planet. Collective action is needed because the most sensitive issues of humankind are of concern to all of us.

I invite the members of the Assembly to find inspiration in the Andean principle of *minga*, which refers to working together and sharing duties for the benefit of the community. Let us create a global *minga* to build societies that are more peaceful, egalitarian, sustainable and resilient.

This year I call on those present to work together around seven priorities.

First, we need to attend to gender equality and the empowerment of women, which remain a debt we owe to more than half the population, and our failure to do so slows global development. Achieving the economic and productive inclusion of women could add an additional 11 per cent to the world's gross domestic product by 2025. Unfortunately, violence against women persists in all regions of the world. Girls and adolescents still lack sufficient access to information and quality education to reduce inequalities.

Second, we must focus on the implementation of the new global compacts on migration and refugees, which will benefit the nearly 260 million migrants and the nearly 25 million refugees who have been displaced by conflict and violence.

Third, we need to create decent work opportunities for all. This represents one of the most important challenges for public policies and the development and sustainability of social security systems.

Fourth, we must work to give greater attention to environmental protection and progress on agreements to curb climate change, as well as the implementation

of the Paris Agreement. Extreme heat waves, forest fires, storms and floods are leaving behind a trail of death and devastation. In August, the state of Kerala in India suffered its worst monsoon flooding in recent history, which killed 400 people and displaced 1 million more from their homes. Hurricanes killed thousands of people in 2017, making them the cause of some of the deadliest extreme-weather disasters in history. We have a responsibility to stop, as soon as possible, the policies and habits of production and consumption that are destroying our planet. I have proposed to highlight the problem of plastic pollution as a widespread environmental hazard that affects the health and well-being of people around the world. The Great Pacific Garbage Patch is more than four times the size of Germany, or three times the size of France, and represents a latent threat to the Pacific coasts of the United States.

Fifth, it is important to strengthen the political and social commitment to people with disabilities. Greater awareness of the specific needs of that population is still needed. Accessibility, inclusive and quality education, and decent jobs are challenges faced by the largest minority of humankind, that is, people with disabilities.

Sixth, we must revitalize the United Nations. We will focus on three areas: implementing system reforms; strengthening the revitalization process of the General Assembly in order to optimize its working methods and enhance its deliberative and decision-making role; and continuing the reform process of the Security Council, in keeping with the will and commitment of States.

Seventh, peace and security and the role of young people in conflict prevention deserve due attention. The Assembly must become the principal peacebuilding organ through a preventive approach. Sustainable peace must be rooted in dialogue and understanding, and facilitating that dialogue will be my priority. The General Assembly must promote efforts to ensure greater opportunities for and political participation by young people in order to prevent conditions from arising that inexorably lead them to violent extremism.

Peace and security constitute one of the central axes of the work of the Organization. The most acute conflicts and disputes must be resolved through dialogue, rapprochement, generosity and mutual understanding, even where there are religious and cultural differences. In recent months, some of those present have taken significant steps towards understanding and peace, which encourages us and merits our recognition.

In July, the President of Eritrea and the Prime Minister of Ethiopia signed a Joint Declaration of Peace and Friendship to end decades of conflict between the two countries. The state of war there has come to an end, and there has been a resumption of diplomatic relations, transport, trade and communications.

Recently, we saw the adoption of the Panmunjom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity and Unification of the Korean Peninsula between the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Both nations agreed to work together to end decades of war and conflict. That represents a historic milestone for a new era of peace and the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. Both events give us hope in a world where many conflicts still await a peaceful solution.

The challenges faced by the Charter of the United Nations have evolved. The threats of climate change, the erosion of biodiversity, human trafficking, environmental pollution, large movements of both migrants and refugees, terrorism and ethnic conflicts have risen to the top of our agenda. We have entered a technological and digital era that fosters economic, social and cultural exchanges that were unimaginable a few decades ago — challenges that the Organization will have to make itself better prepared to face.

That is why we must make progress in implementing the reforms to the United Nations system. We want a more effective and responsive Organization that reflects the political and economic realities of a changing world. The leadership and commitment of States and the Secretary-General, His Excellency António Guterres, are encouraging for decisive progress in those reforms. We must maintain our vision and commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as that is the only way of ensuring that all people can live in dignity and peace.

I invite all present to devote particular attention to the vulnerabilities of countries in special situations and the efforts needed for them to fulfil their Sustainable Development Goals. For example, the small island States, landlocked countries and the least developed nations require our shared responsibility to achieve those Goals.

(*spoke in French*)

I reaffirm my commitment to Africa and its peoples. Let us dedicate our best efforts to accelerating the implementation of Africa's development agenda. Let us not only talk about Africa, but let us also act with Africa.

One of the outstanding challenges of the Organization is to achieve a definitive and lasting peace in the Middle East, in line with the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the Assembly.

(*spoke in English*)

This year, we commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The fight for human rights remains a challenge in the world.

Seventy years ago, a great woman, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, led the work of the Human Rights Commission in charge of drafting the Universal Declaration. One of her statements illustrates, in a simple way, why we must work to bring this Organization and its decisions closer to our peoples. Mrs. Roosevelt asked:

> "Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home — so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any of the maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighbourhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm or office where he works.
>
> "Such are the places where every man, woman and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world."

(*spoke in Spanish*)

I wish to inaugurate the seventy-third session of the General Assembly with an effusive appeal to the world's leaders to live up to the needs of our peoples and not to falter in their attempts to build a more peaceful, safer and more humane world order, where each person can find their place with dignity. Let us build, then, a United Nations that is more relevant to all people.

Before giving the floor to the first speaker for this morning, I would like to remind members that the list of speakers for the general debate has been established on the agreed basis that statements should be no longer than 15 minutes so as to enable all the speakers to be heard at a given meeting.

I would like to appeal to speakers to deliver their statements at a reasonable pace within this time frame, so that interpretation into the other official United Nations languages may be provided properly.

I would also like to draw attention to the decision taken by the General Assembly at previous sessions, namely, that the practice of expressing congratulations inside the General Assembly Hall after a speech has been delivered is strongly discouraged.

In that connection, after delivering their statements, speakers are invited to exit the General Assembly Hall through room GA-200, located behind the rostrum, before returning to their seats.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to proceed in the same manner during the general debate of the seventy-third session?

It was so decided.

The President: Finally, I should like to draw the attention of members to the fact that during the general debate official photographs of all the speakers are taken by the Department of Public Information. Members interested in obtaining such photographs are requested to contact the Photo Library of the United Nations.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Michel Temer, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil.

Mr. Michel Temer, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Michel Temer, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Temer (*spoke in Portuguese; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): It is an honour for Brazil and it gives us great pleasure to officially open this general debate.

I am pleased to greet the President of the General Assembly, María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, the first Latin American woman to hold that high office at the United Nations. Allow me to reiterate, Madam, my wishes for your every success, and rest assured that you can count on Brazil.

It is also particularly satisfying to greet Secretary-General António Guterres in our common language.

How many speakers have already come to this rostrum to call for the improvement of the international order that we have been building for decades? There have certainly been many, myself included. I believe we were and still are right to do so, and the words we spoke remain relevant.

However, if we truly want to improve our international collective order, yet another task is required of us today: to defend the very integrity of that order. However imperfect it may be, the current order has nevertheless served the greater interests of humankind.

There are numerous challenges to the integrity of the current international order. We live in times clouded by isolationist forces. Old intolerances are re-emerging. Unilateral relapses are increasingly becoming less the exception than the rule. Yet those challenges should not and cannot intimidate us. When it comes to isolationism, intolerance and unilateralism, we must respond to each of those tendencies with the very best that our peoples have.

Brazil has been responding to the first of those tendencies — isolationism — with more openness and more integration. Brazil is keenly aware that our common development ultimately depends on more international trade and investment flows. It depends on increased contact with new ideas and with new technologies. We will build prosperity that can be effectively shared only by opening ourselves to others, rather than by withdrawing into introspection and isolation.

That is how Brazil has acted. We have implemented a universalist foreign policy. We have worked to deepen integration mechanisms in our geographic region. Within the South American Common Market, for example, we have reaffirmed the group's democratic calling, brought trade barriers down and entered into new agreements. We have been pushing for strengthened ties with the countries forming the Pacific Alliance so as to seek an increasingly united Latin America, as enshrined in our Constitution.

We have also revitalized and initiated trade negotiations with partners in all regions, such as the European Union, the European Free Trade Association, Canada, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia. Through these and other initiatives, we continue to strengthen our relationships with the Americas as a whole, as well as with Europe, Asia and Africa.

Brazil's participation in cooperation forums, such as the G-20, the BRICS group of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, has been especially productive. In those forums we have worked to produce tangible results that have a direct impact on the daily life of our societies. It is with openness and integration that we approach a better future for all. Isolation may provide a false sense of security. Protectionism may sound seductive. But it is with openness and integration that we achieve harmony, growth and progress.

Turning to the challenge posed by intolerance, Brazil has responded decisively with dialogue and solidarity, which inspire us, at every moment, to honour the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The implementation of that document, created almost 70 years ago, is an imperative that requires permanent attention and action. Much has already been done for the sake of human rights by Governments, institutions and individuals. One such remarkable individual was Sérgio Vieira de Mello, a Brazilian national to whom I wish to pay tribute as we remember the fifteenth anniversary of his tragic death.

We must nonetheless acknowledge that violations of international norms protecting individuals and their dignity persist worldwide. In Latin America, Brazil has been working to uphold democracy and human rights. We will continue to do so with so many other countries in solidarity with brotherly peoples that have suffered so much.

Dialogue and solidarity also form the basis for the recently agreed global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. There are more than 250 million migrants in the world. These are men, women and children who, threatened by protracted crises, are faced with the hard and risky choice of leaving their homelands. It is our duty to protect them, and that is

the very purpose of the global compact on migration. It now falls on us to conclude the negotiations on the global compact on refugees.

In South America, a large-scale migratory wave is under way. It is estimated that more than 1 million Venezuelans have left their country in search of better living conditions. Brazil has welcomed all those who have arrived in our territory. We have sought to provide assistance of all types to tens of thousands of migrants. In cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, we have built shelters to protect them as best as we can. We have sought to relocate them throughout the country. We have issued documents that enable them to work in Brazil. We have offered schooling for the children, and vaccination and health services for all. But we know that this crisis can be resolved only when our neighbour, Venezuela, rediscovers the path of development.

Brazil has a proud tradition of welcoming foreigners. As a people, we have been forged through diversity. There is a piece of the world in every Brazilian. Faithful to that tradition, last year we passed a new migration law — a modern piece of legislation that not only protects the immigrant's dignity but also recognizes the benefits of immigration. We in Brazil have expanded rights and have streamlined the entry and residence process.

Dialogue and solidarity are antidotes to intolerance, and they are the foundation for a lasting peace. That has been the cornerstone of the Brazilian position regarding the various crises in the Middle East. As it joins the celebrations of the seventieth anniversary of the creation of Israel, Brazil renews its support for the two-State solution — Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security.

We also support international efforts to bring the conflict in Syria to a long overdue end. We have sought to help alleviate the great suffering there. In 2017 alone, for example, Brazil donated approximately one ton of medicines and vaccines for children affected by the conflict. We have also welcomed a considerable number of Syrian refugees.

On the Korean peninsula, dialogue and solidarity represent the cornerstone of our position. We reiterate our support for diplomatic solutions leading to denuclearization and peace.

It is through dialogue and solidarity that we will overcome intolerance and build peace. As expressed by Nelson Mandela, whose centenary we commemorate this year, it is our duty to strive towards "a world of tolerance and respect for difference", and to show an unwavering "commitment to peaceful solutions of conflicts and disputes".

Lastly, the challenge of unilateralism must be met with more diplomacy and more multilateralism. We do so firmly convinced that collective problems demand coordinated solutions. That is noblest meaning of the United Nations — a house for mutual understanding.

We must strengthen the Organization. We must make it more legitimate and effective. We need important reforms — among them the reform of the Security Council, whose current configuration reflects a world that no longer exists. Finally, we must reinvigorate the values of diplomacy and multilateralism. We have shown time and again what we are capable of together when those values guide our actions, such as when we took a historic step last year in concluding the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. I had the honour of being the first Head of State to sign it.

That is also how, over the course of decades, we built a robust multilateral trade system with increasingly comprehensive rules and a credible and effective dispute-settlement mechanism. Those are shared historic achievements, which we must honour and broaden by eliminating the many distortions in agricultural trade, which primarily affect developing countries.

Diplomacy and multilateralism provide us with effective solutions well beyond disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and international trade. The same is true in many other areas, such as sustainable development, which is crucial for the future of humankind.

I note that in recent years alone, we adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement. Those are true milestones that put us on the path of economic development with social justice and respect for the environment. Brazil's early commitment to sustainable development remains unwavering. There is no shortage of examples.

We are fully committed to the shift towards a low-carbon international economy. Over 40 per cent of Brazil's energy portfolio is clean and renewable. It is one of the most sustainable in the world. We have

also stepped up efforts to reduce deforestation. Long-term trends are encouraging. Today, in the Brazilian Amazon region, deforestation rates are 75 per cent lower than in 2004. Over the past two years, we have created and expanded environmental protection areas in Brazil, which are now more than four times the size of Norway.

The protection of the oceans is another cause that is dear to us. During the World Water Forum, which we hosted in Brasilia earlier this year, we established protected areas in Brazilian waters as vast as Germany and France combined. In two years, we have doubled the size of protected areas in Brazil.

Diplomacy and multilateralism are also decisive instruments for global security, as demonstrated by United Nations peacekeeping missions, in which Brazil is proud to play a major role. And make no mistake, they are also decisive instruments for defeating terrorism and fighting transnational crime. Trafficking in persons, arms and drugs, money laundering, and sexual exploitation are crimes that know no borders. They are scourges that corrode our societies and can be effectively tackled only through concerted policies and actions.

That is what we have done in our region. In Brasilia, we hosted the first ministerial meeting of South American countries on border security. Since then, we have stepped up cooperation with our neighbours in combating transnational crime. We must remain united in the collective task of building a world where peace, development and human rights prevail. Absolutely nothing will be achieved alone. We will achieve nothing without diplomacy and multilateralism.

This is the last time that I will have the privilege of representing my country in the general debate at the General Assembly as the President of the Republic. In two weeks, the Brazilian people will go to the polls. They will choose their political leaders in both the executive and the legislative branches, who will govern Brazil starting in 2019, as enshrined in our Constitution. That is what has been done for almost 30 year, and that is how it must always be. After all, we are Government officials chosen by the people because all power comes from the people, and the President holds the power only for a fixed period. The transfer of power is the very essence of democracy. Ours is a vibrant democracy anchored by solid institutions. As I turn over the presidency to my successor, I will have the peace of mind of having fulfilled my duties.

Today, in Brazil, we can look back and realize how much we have accomplished in such a short term of office. We rejected populism, and we overcame the worst recession in our history, with severe consequences for society, especially for the poor. We managed public finances responsibly and restored our economic credibility. We are growing and creating jobs again. Social programmes once threatened by uncontrolled spending have been rescued and expanded. We put Brazil back on the path of development.

The country that I will hand over to whomever the Brazilian people elect will be better than the one I received. Much remains to be done, but we are back on track. It is time to move ahead. The incoming Administration and National Congress will find a solid foundation upon which a more prosperous and just country can continue to be built.

The members of the General Assembly know that Brazil will always be a steady ally for cooperation among nations. In the face of isolationism, Brazil responds with more openness and integration. In the face of intolerance, it responds with increased dialogue and solidarity. And, in the face of unilateralism, it responds with more diplomacy and multilateralism.

In the words of the late Kofi Annan:

> "Our mission is to confront ignorance with knowledge, bigotry with tolerance, and isolation with the outstretched hand of generosity".

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Michel Temer, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Lenin Moreno Garcés, Constitutional President of the Republic of Ecuador

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the Constitutional President of the Republic of Ecuador.

Mr. Lenin Moreno Garcés, Constitutional President of the Republic of Ecuador, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Lenin Moreno Garcés, Constitutional President of the Republic of Ecuador, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Moreno Garcés (*spoke in Spanish*): Everything in life is cause and effect, and every effect has a cause. Human beings tend to look to the past to find similarities in order to predict the future, because we are, inescapably and permanently, governed by cause and effect.

We, the rulers, leaders and decision-makers, have an immense responsibility to alter the way in which the world perceives its future. Our peoples must understand that causality is not inevitability. On the contrary, people have the ability to change their circumstances. In order for them to do so, the international policies that are shaped here, in the most important of the world's forums, must help us to empower our societies and to conceive of history as something that we can change. Policies are successful when they seek to resolve everyone's personal stories, especially those of the poorest, neediest and most disenfranchised — because we are nations united to change the history of peoples.

Our Government plan is called A Whole Life, because that is who we are and what we do. At the end of the day, we have a whole life to be right and wrong, to dream, to build and to love. It is up to us to analyse and manage the consequences. The plan is called A Whole Life because we want to attend to human beings from the moment of conception to the moment that God decides to close their eyes — to their departure. Depending on where each person is in his or her life cycle, our attention could involve care, inspiration, encouragement, support or gratitude.

Care and inspiration are more appropriate for the first stage. Caring for mothers and children, before and after birth, and looking after that child during its first 1,000 days of life is a mission of warmth.

Then comes the stage of inspiring those little ones to enjoy themselves, to play, to study and to be happy. We must teach them to love science and to be passionate about technology. It is important to study, but it is perhaps more constructive and enlightening to be creative, to love research, to indulge one's imagination, to explore the challenges of technology, to continuously cultivate one's values and to never stop playing and experimenting with colours, sounds, smells, textures, flavours and knowledge.

After that comes encouragement, aimed at offering young people knowledge that will serve them in the future, in their professional career, and at encouraging them to be enterprising and to hold themselves in high esteem. We must make their future more transparent and less complicated. We must help them learn to love life and to discover the beauty of their environment, so that they are never forced to seek satisfaction or security in foreign substances. We must encourage them with praise, with greater participation and with confidence in their abilities and their dreams.

Support is for the adult, perhaps. We support adults in their efforts to get jobs, build families and succeed in their endeavours aimed at ensuring social and personal security and, above all, to put a roof over their heads. We have called that mission A House for All.

Finally comes gratitude, which seeks to enable our elders to live out their lives knowing that their society appreciates what they have done. Let them live surrounded by love, company and care, so that those years can be their best.

Someone once asked me how these proposals were born, and I answered with several maybes. Maybe it is because I was born and spent my childhood in the heart of the Amazon, the lung of the world, in the most diverse tropical rainforest on the planet. There I became familiar with the deep problems of an abandoned region. I could see how precarious health and life were without minimum coverage for human beings. Many children died, and many mothers perished with them.

Within the framework of the General Assembly, two fundamental health issues will be addressed at the highest level — tuberculosis and non-transmissible diseases. It is my hope and Ecuador's commitment, above all, that those discussions will lead to agreements for and commitments to concrete action. It is scandalous, unjust and immoral that access to life-saving medicines is often limited because intellectual property and the profits of the big pharmaceutical companies are favoured over a universal right to health. It is that kind of discussion that enables the United Nations to have meaning in the daily lives of the world's citizens. The more we strive to enable our United Nations to touch people's lives, the more we will strengthen the Organization for the future.

Maybe it is because, after several years of playing in my neighbourhood, surrounded by supportive neighbours, I learned the value of community life. We would visit people's homes, the neighbours took care of us, we helped one other in all circumstances and we celebrated our achievements in community. In fact, the ideal of shared peace and life was also the genesis of the United Nations.

We cannot forget that this must be the heart of the discussion of the large and small problems existing among countries, and that, within the framework of that discussion, we must call for ongoing dialogue, as mentioned by President Temer, for reciprocity as an institution, for strengthening multilateralism, for listening to one another in dialogue, but above all, for listening to those who live in situations that we wish to analyse, address and solve.

Maybe it is because when I was young, I and other colleagues had excellent ideas, but lacked both the knowledge and the capacity to carry out our hopes. We therefore had to live through the anguish of not having start-up capital for our businesses, and we suffered long nights when monthly payments were due, while also struggling to pay our workers. We learned at first hand not to allow ourselves to be undervalued for being young. We learned the decisive role of private enterprise. We understood that entrepreneurship is a value that generates production, wealth, employment, well-being, self-esteem and freedom.

Today, the private sector in the global arena is more aware of its role — extending far beyond profit, production and employment. Today, large, medium-sized and small enterprises have thousands of communicating vessels, which, by understanding their purpose, which is to ensure well-being in their daily actions, can be key actors for global action to promote peace and prosperity. In that connection, we must together keep the commitments we have undertaken, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which promotes partnership as a core element.

Maybe it is because 20 years ago, I was assaulted and lost the use of my legs. As those present can see, I am wheelchair-bound. Is that bad? I do not know. Chinese wisdom says that things are neither so bad, nor so good. It was bad because returning home from the hospital was hard; there were no more intravenous tubes or painkillers, but rather a constant and persistent pain. I was reminded of Francis of Assisi, who spoke of the pain of another, because I found that there are other, and perhaps even greater, pains. It was also good because now, from my wheelchair, I see at the height of the heart. When people have legs, they see straight and upwards. Whereas from a wheelchair, we see horizontally and downwards, and as such, we discover other realities and worlds. We see those who encounter obstacles impeding them in their efforts to move forward, to continue, and even to live — obstacles of varying types: mistreatment, xenophobia, racism, injustice, machismo and inequity, in other words, exclusion. That story is not just my story; it is the story of 1 billion people around the world.

I welcome the fact that one of the main topics to be addressed is the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The implementation of that Convention and its Optional Protocol is the best guarantee that, together, we will fulfil a pending commitment. In that regard, Ecuador is honoured to hold the presidency of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention for the next two years.

From that position, we will contribute to the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, as well as step up efforts already in motion to achieve greater accessibility, with a view to enabling the United Nations to become truly inclusive. We are not only talking about physical accessibility, but also about having people with disabilities and their rights be considered in all United Nations discussions, resolutions and initiatives.

Maybe because now, just as in the past, as I travel around my country and the world, I see exclusion and injustice. We exclude the different, the poor, the elderly, the young. We mistreat women, girls and indigenous people. There are so many abandoned and forgotten brothers and sisters. Many people simply pass by, without even noticing their presence. As States Members of the United Nations we cannot allow indolence and idleness, misery and injustice to continue to be part of the daily landscape. That is what the Sustainable Development Goals draw attention to. They are a fundamental part of the programme that my Government has proposed to the Ecuadorian people, which we have called, and I will repeat, A Whole Life.

Maybe because it is evident to me that we want to be happy throughout life, and that is why we govern. We are here in a great country. The Declaration of Independence of the United States of America, written

by Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and Benjamin Franklin, states in its famous second sentence,

> "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness".

What a phrase "the pursuit of happiness" is. That sentence inspired, inter alia, the Constitution of this great country — a reference for the world that inspires scientific research and development.

For that reason, and maybe because we always follow world events closely, we do not understand how a country like this one can blockade an almost defenceless people such as Cuba. It is impossible for us to understand blockades against others, including possibly their rights to life, freedom and the pursuit of happiness.

Maybe because we were young idealists and we continue to be dissatisfied adults, we do not understand how the great Powers can spend their resources on weapons, instead of investing in the development of peoples. For that reason, perhaps, we do not understand how those countries that have achieved development and superiority in armaments and have also felt the pain of war through their own children can intervene in other people's conflicts, not with a view to helping to resolve them, but to the contrary, to aggravate, and even perpetuate, them.

Maybe because when unscrupulous bankers raided the pockets of Ecuadorians, we saw families and children left helpless and turn to migration. When Governments deviate from their objective of caring for the poorest and the most vulnerable, those people seek better opportunities outside of and far from their own land. No one abandons their beloved land voluntarily.

In Ecuador, we receive an inflow of at least 6,000 Venezuelan brothers and sisters daily. The children arrive with measles, diphtheria and polio, and pregnant women arrive never having had a check-up. We have earmarked more than 50,000 vaccines for those beautiful and defenceless children, and we have carried out tens of thousands of health check-ups on the more than 1 million brothers and sisters who have left their homes in search of better luck in the largest diaspora in the history of our continent.

We have urged the Venezuelan Government and people to resolve their crisis, as they should, through a candid and inclusive national dialogue. We recently invited the brother countries of the region to practice solidarity, in a practical and integrated manner, with the Venezuelan migrants, displaced persons and refugees. We do not want our countries to be left standing alone merely with diplomatic statements. We want continent-wide action to find a structural solution to the problems of our fraternal people of Venezuela. I reiterate that no one migrates of their own volition. They do so because they are forced to be uprooted and to painfully distance themselves from their families and emotions.

José Martí said that when a people emigrates, their rulers are the leftovers. There are plenty who prolong their stay in power and become dark, sinister Governments with corrupt mafias. And just as we are in solidarity with those who come to us, we also invite our own long-departed to return to their place of birth and reintegrate into the big family that is their country.

The global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration was adopted by Ecuador in July and will be adopted at the global level in December in Morocco. We cannot let that compact become a dead letter. We must keep in mind that inclusion has no borders, and that the rights of others to life and happiness do not end where mine begin. Both rights are an inherent part of human beings. They are interdependent and enriched by being interwoven through cohabitation.

With regard to the Venezuelan crisis — or that which Nicaragua is experiencing — our Latin America has the great challenge of strengthening its democracy after various countries have endured authoritarian, corrupt and populist Governments. The history of the United Nations is the history of a common pact for the preservation of the human rights of the citizens of the world.

Rights can be guaranteed only within the framework of solid institutions, with ample freedom of expression and transitions of power, which are the fundamental elements of solid democracies and must be the commitment of our nations in order to build those democracies, care for them and treasure them. My Government maintains its democratic commitment and, in each of its actions and decisions, preserves its commitment to the original ideals of our United Nations.

The late Kofi Annan, a great man who left so many important lessons, said that, in the face of growing

cynicism about democracy, we should not give up but rather defend and advocate for the values and virtues of democracy.

Madam President, our dear friend and colleague María Fernanda Espinosa, you are the first Latin American woman to preside over the Assembly. Ecuador is grateful for the support of our sister nations in your election, and we are aware of the immense responsibility that you have at the helm of this global forum.

We will all support work aimed at ensuring that the United Nations is relevant to our peoples. We are the Organization that unites our nations in their concerns and their aspirations. We see the international efforts made by the United Nations to care for us, for our children and for our neighbours. That is why we support its plan for disarmament; that is why we support the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, and why we promote the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol (resolution 61/106), along with a lenghty list of other actions, commitments and decisions.

The United Nations is our Organization. If there are flaws in it, let us correct them. We must not try to disrupt it nor revoke funding from it, because we must strengthen it if we want to provide our children with a bright future. If we are going to create complementary organizations — for example, in order to bolster trade systems or specific regional projects on culture, education or sport — these are most welcome, so long as their objectives are to strengthen the global union, to implement the Sustainable Development Goals and to honour all the historic commitments that we have undersigned. However, we do not believe in, nor should we use, regional organizations to defend anachronistic, perverse and dictatorial systems, some of which were born and then, fortunately, died in recent decades.

This institution is the most important living symbol of the world's commitment to peace. For years we have often spoken at length about peace, but no one has been able to surpass Gandhi's definition of peace as the sole path for humankind.

Peace is our right. It is a sine qua non condition for life and happiness. Ecuador is currently experiencing serious problems affecting our internal peace owing to violence on the northern border. We benefit greatly from mutual help from the President of Colombia, our dear friend Ivan Duque. We are also dealing with international crime and drug trafficking, and we have made a commitment to put an end to them.

As each cause will have its effect, and each effect continues to transform itself into yet another cause, we know that working for world peace is a constant obligation. This is because it has not yet fully taken root in the heart of every human being. As a father and a grandfather, I know that there will be no peace, if we do not inculcate the proper values throughout our peoples' lives. I know that kindness, for example, is not a matter of public interest, and civility, honesty and transparency are not subjects taught in schools and universities, but they must be instilled in the hearts of all human beings. Otherwise, we will never lay the foundations for a peaceful coexistence — the very goal of our Organization, which welcomes us today.

As a native of the Amazon region, I know very well that there will be no peace if we do not preserve the planet. We must regard the jungle not as simply the lungs but as the heart of our world. As a person with disabilities, I know that there will be no peace if we do not embrace inclusion and celebrate diversity. Diversity does not mean suffering; diversity means living and enjoying it. As a President, I know that peace is definitively favourable for those who are poorest and is crucial for those who are most in need. Peace ensures that everyone, without exception, is free to realize their dreams every day for the rest of their lives.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Ecuador for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Lenin Moreno Garcés, President of the Republic of Ecuador, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Donald Trump, President of the United States of America

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the United States of America.

Mr. Donald Trump, President of the United States of America, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Donald Trump, President of the United States of America, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Trump: One year ago, I stood before the Assembly for the first time in this Hall (see A/72/PV.3). I addressed the threats facing our world, and I presented a vision to achieve a brighter future for all of humankind. Today, I stand before the General Assembly to share the extraordinary progress that we have made. In less than two years, my Administration has accomplished more than almost any Administration in the history of our country.

America's economy is booming like never before. Since my election, we have added $10 trillion in wealth. The stock market is at an all-time high in history, and jobless claims are at a 50-year low. African-American, Hispanic-American and Asian-American unemployment have all achieved their lowest levels ever recorded. We have added more than 4 million new jobs, including half a million manufacturing jobs. We passed the biggest tax cuts and reforms in American history. We started the construction of a major border wall and we have greatly strengthened border security. We have secured record funding for our military — $700 billion this year and $716 billion next year. Our military will soon be more powerful than it has ever been before.

In other words, the United States is a stronger, safer and richer country than it was when I assumed office less than two years ago. We are standing up for America and for the American people. We are also standing up for the world. This is great news for our citizens and for peace-loving people everywhere. We believe that, when nations respect the rights of their neighbours and defend the interests of their people, they can better work together to secure the blessings of safety, prosperity and peace.

Each of us here today is the emissary of a distinct culture, a rich history and a people bound together by ties of memory, tradition and the values that make our homelands like nowhere else on Earth. That is why America will always choose independence and cooperation over global governance, control and domination. I honour the right of every nation in this Hall to pursue its own customs, beliefs and traditions. The United States will not tell nations how to live or work or worship. We only ask that you honour our sovereignty in return.

From Warsaw to Brussels and from Tokyo to Singapore, it has been my highest honour to represent the United States abroad. I have forged close relationships and friendships and strong partnerships with the leaders of many nations in this Hall, and our approach has always yielded incredible change.

With support from many countries here today, we have engaged with North Korea to replace the spectre of conflict with a bold and new push for peace. In June, I travelled to Singapore to meet face to face with North Korea's leader, Chairman Kim Jong Un. We had highly productive conversations and meetings. And we agreed that it was in both countries' interests to pursue the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. Since that meeting, we have already seen a number of encouraging measures that few could have imagined only a short time ago.

Missiles and rockets are no longer flying in every direction, nuclear testing has stopped and some military facilities are already being dismantled. Our hostages have been released and, as promised, the remains of our fallen heroes are being returned home to lay at rest in American soil. I would like to thank Chairman Kim for his courage and for the steps he has taken, though much work remains to be done. The sanctions will stay in place until denuclearization occurs.

I also want to thank the many Member States who helped us reach this moment — which is in fact far greater than people might understand — for their critical support, which we will all need going forward. I would also like to extend special thanks to President Moon of South Korea, Prime Minister Abe of Japan and President Xi of China.

In the Middle East, our new approach is also yielding great strides and historic change. Following my trip to Saudi Arabia last year, the Gulf countries opened a new centre to target terrorist financing. They are enforcing new sanctions, working with us to identify and track terrorist networks and taking more responsibility for fighting terrorism and extremism in their own region.

The United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Qatar have pledged billions of dollars to aid the people of Syria and Yemen. They are pursuing multiple avenues to end Yemen's horrible, horrific civil war. Ultimately, it is up to the nations of the region to decide what kind of future they want for themselves and their children.

For that reason, the United States is working with the Gulf Cooperation Council, Jordan and Egypt to establish a regional strategic alliance so that Middle

Eastern nations can advance prosperity, stability and security across their home region.

Thanks to the United States military and our partnership with many nations, I am pleased to report that the bloodthirsty killers known as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham have been driven out from the territory they once held in Iraq and Syria. We will continue to work with friends and allies to deny radical Islamic terrorists any funding, territory or support or any means of infiltrating our borders.

The ongoing tragedy in Syria is heartbreaking. Our shared goals must be the de-escalation of military conflict, along with a political solution that honours the will of the Syrian people. In this vein, we urge that the United Nations-led peace process be reinvigorated. Rest assured, the United States will respond if chemical weapons are deployed by the Al-Assad regime.

I commend the people of Jordan and other neighbouring countries for hosting refugees from this brutal civil war. As we see in Jordan, the most compassionate policy is to place refugees as close to their homes as possible to ease their eventual return as part of the rebuilding process. This approach also stretches finite resources to help far more people, increasing the impact of every dollar spent.

Every solution to the humanitarian crisis in Syria must also include a strategy to address the brutal regime that has fuelled and financed it: the corrupt dictatorship in Iran. Iran's leaders sow chaos, death and destruction. They do not respect their neighbours or borders or the sovereign rights of nations. Instead, Iran's leaders plunder the nation's resources to enrich themselves and spread mayhem across the Middle East and far beyond. The Iranian people are rightly outraged that their leaders have embezzled billions of dollars from Iran's treasury, seized valuable portions of the economy and looted the people's religious endowments — all to line their own pockets and send their proxies to wage war. Not good.

Iran's neighbours have paid a heavy toll for the regime's agenda of aggression and expansion. That is why so many countries in the Middle East strongly supported my decision to withdraw the United States from the horrible 2015 Iran nuclear deal and reimpose nuclear sanctions. The Iran deal was a windfall for Iran's leaders. In the years since the deal was reached, Iran's military budget grew nearly 40 per cent. The dictatorship used the funds to build nuclear-capable missiles, increase internal repression, finance terrorism and fund havoc and slaughter in Syria and Yemen.

The United States has launched a campaign of economic pressure to deny the regime the funds it needs to advance its bloody agenda. Last month, we began reimposing hard-hitting nuclear sanctions that had been lifted under the Iran deal. Additional sanctions will resume 5 November, and more will follow. And we are working with countries that import Iranian crude oil to cut their purchases substantially. We cannot allow the world's leading sponsor of terrorism to possess the planet's most dangerous weapons. We cannot allow a regime that chants "Death to America" and threatens Israel with annihilation to possess the means to deliver a nuclear warhead to any city on Earth. We just cannot do it. We ask all nations to isolate Iran's regime as long as its aggression continues. And we ask all nations to support Iran's people as they struggle to reclaim their religious and righteous destiny.

This year, we also took another significant step forward in the Middle East. In recognition of every sovereign State's right to determine its own capital, I moved the United States Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem. The United States is committed to a future of peace and stability in the region, including peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians. That aim is advanced, not harmed, by acknowledging the obvious facts. America's policy of principled realism means we will not be held hostage to old dogmas, discredited ideologies and so-called experts who have been proven wrong over the years, time and time again. That is true not only in matters of peace, but in matters of prosperity.

We believe that trade must be fair and reciprocal. The United States will not be taken advantage of any longer. For decades, the United States opened its economy — the largest, by far, on Earth — with few conditions. We allowed foreign goods from all over the world to flow freely across our borders. Yet other countries did not grant us fair and reciprocal access to their markets in return. Even worse, some countries abused their openness to dump their products, subsidize their goods, target our industries and manipulate their currencies to gain unfair advantage over our country. As a result, our trade deficit ballooned to nearly $800 billion a year. For that reason, we are systematically renegotiating broken and bad trade deals.

Last month, we announced a ground-breaking United States-Mexico trade agreement. And just yesterday, I

stood with President Moon to announce the successful completion of the brand new United States-Korea trade deal. And that is just the beginning. Many nations in this Hall will agree that the world trading system is in dire need of change. For example, countries were admitted to the World Trade Organization (WTO) that violate every single principle on which the organization is based. While the United States and many other nations play by the rules, those countries use Government-run industrial planning and State-owned enterprises to rig the system in their favour. They engage in relentless product dumping, forced technology transfer and the theft of intellectual property.

The United States lost more than 3 million manufacturing jobs, nearly a quarter of all steel jobs and 60,000 factories after China joined the WTO. And we have racked up $13 trillion in trade deficits over the past two decades. But those days are over. We will no longer tolerate such abuse. We will not allow our workers to be victimized, our companies to be cheated and our wealth to be plundered and transferred. America will never apologize for protecting its citizens. The United States has just announced tariffs on another $200 billion in Chinese-made goods — for a total, so far, of $250 billion. I have great respect and affection for my friend President Xi, but I have made it clear that our trade imbalance is just not acceptable. China's market distortions and the way they deal cannot be tolerated. As my Administration has demonstrated, America will always act in our national interests.

I spoke before this body last year (see A/72/PV.3) and warned that the Human Rights Council had become a grave embarrassment to this institution, shielding egregious human rights abusers while bashing America and its many friends. Our Ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, laid out a clear agenda for reform, but despite reported and repeated warnings, no action at all was taken. The United States took the only responsible course. We withdrew from the Human Rights Council, and we will not return until real reform is enacted. For similar reasons, the United States will provide no support or recognition to the International Criminal Court (ICC). As far as America is concerned, the ICC has no jurisdiction, no legitimacy and no authority. The ICC claims near-universal jurisdiction over the citizens of every country, violating all principles of justice, fairness and due process. We will never surrender America's sovereignty to an unelected, unaccountable global bureaucracy. America is governed by Americans. We reject the ideology of globalism and we embrace the doctrine of patriotism. Around the world, responsible nations must defend against threats to sovereignty not just from global governance, but also from other new forms of coercion and domination.

In America, we believe strongly in energy security for ourselves and for our allies. We have become the largest energy producer anywhere on the face of the Earth. The United States stands ready to export our abundant, affordable supply of oil, clean coal and natural gas. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and OPEC nations, are, as usual, ripping off the rest of the world, and I do not like it. Nobody should like it. We defend many of those nations for nothing, and then they take advantage of us by giving us high oil prices. Not good. We want them to stop raising prices. We want them to start lowering prices. And they must contribute substantially to military protection from now on. We are not going to put up with such horrible prices much longer. Reliance on a single foreign supplier can leave a nation vulnerable to extortion and intimidation. That is why we congratulate European States, such as Poland, for leading the construction of a Baltic pipeline so that nations are not dependent on Russia to meet their energy needs. Germany will become totally dependent on Russian energy if it does not immediately change its course.

Here, in the western hemisphere, we are committed to maintaining our independence from the encroachment of expansionist foreign powers. It has been the formal policy of our country since President Monroe to reject the interference of foreign nations in this hemisphere and in our own affairs.

The United States recently strengthened our laws to better screen foreign investments in our country for national security threats, and we welcome cooperation with countries in the region and around the world that wish to do the same. You need to do it for your own protection.

The United States is also working with partners in Latin America to confront threats to sovereignty from uncontrolled migration. Tolerance of human smuggling and trafficking is not humane. It is horrible thing that is going on, at levels that nobody has ever seen before. It is very cruel. Illegal immigration funds criminal networks, ruthless gangs and the flow of deadly drugs. Illegal immigration exploits vulnerable populations, hurts hard-working citizens and has produced a vicious

cycle of crime, violence and poverty. Only by upholding national borders and destroying criminal gangs can we break that cycle and establish a real foundation for prosperity.

We recognize the right of every nation in this Hall to set its own immigration policy in accordance with its national interests, just as we ask other countries to respect our own right to do the same — which we are doing. That is one reason the United States will not participate in the new global compact for migration. Migration should not be governed by an international body that is unaccountable to our own citizens. Ultimately, the only long-term solution to the migration crisis is to help people build more hopeful futures in their home countries, to make their countries great again.

Currently, we are witnessing a human tragedy, to give an example, in Venezuela. More than 2 million people have fled the anguish inflicted by the socialist Maduro regime and its Cuban sponsors. Not long ago, Venezuela was one of the richest countries on Earth. Today socialism has bankrupted the oil-rich nation and driven its people into abject poverty. Almost everywhere socialism or communism has been tried, it has produced suffering, corruption and decay.

Socialism's thirst for power leads to expansion, incursion and oppression. All nations of the world should resist socialism and the misery that it brings to everyone. In that spirit, we ask the nations that are gathered here to join us in calling for the restoration of democracy in Venezuela. Today we are announcing additional sanctions against the repressive regime, targeting Maduro's inner circle and close advisers.

We are grateful for all the work the United Nations does around the world to help people build better lives for themselves and their families. The United States is by far the world's largest giver of foreign aid, but few give anything to us. That is why we are taking a hard look at United States foreign assistance. That will be headed up by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. We will examine what is working, what is not working and whether the countries that receive our dollars and our protection also have our interests at heart. Moving forward, we are only going to give foreign aid to those that respect us and, frankly, are our friends. We expect other countries to pay their fair share of the cost of their defence.

The United States is committed to making the United Nations more effective and accountable. I have said many times that the United Nations has unlimited potential. As part of our reform effort, I have told our negotiators that the United States will not pay more than 25 per cent of the United Nations peacekeeping budget. That will encourage other countries to step up, get involved and share the very large burden. We are working to shift more of our funding from assessed to voluntary contributions, so that we can target American resources to the programmes with the best record of success. Only when each of us does its part and contributes its share can we realize the highest aspirations of the United Nations.

We must pursue peace without fear, hope without despair and security without apology. Looking around this Hall, where so much history has transpired, we think of the many before us who have come here to address the challenges of their nations and times. Our thoughts turn to the same question that ran through all their speeches and resolutions, through every word and every hope. It is a question of what kind of world we will leave for our children and what kind of nations they will inherit. The dreams that fill this Hall today are as diverse as the people that have stood at this rostrum, and as varied as the countries represented here in this body. It really is something. It really is great history.

There is India, a free society with more than 1 billion people, successfully lifting countless millions out of poverty and into the middle class. There is Saudi Arabia, where King Salman and the Crown Prince are pursuing bold new reforms. There is Israel, proudly celebrating its seventieth anniversary as a thriving democracy in the holy land. In Poland, a great people are standing up for their independence, security and sovereignty. Many countries are pursuing their own unique visions, building their own hopeful futures and chasing their own wonderful dreams of destiny, legacy and a home. The whole world is richer and humanity is better because of this beautiful constellation of nations, each very special, each very unique and each shining brightly in its part of the world. In each one, we see the awesome promise of a people bound together by a shared past and working towards a common future.

As for Americans, we know what kind of future we want for ourselves. We know what kind of nation America must always be. In America we believe in the majesty of freedom and the dignity of the individual. We believe in self-government and the rule of law. And we prize

the culture that sustains our liberty — a culture built on strong families, deep faith and fierce independence. We celebrate our heroes, we treasure our traditions and, above all, we love our country.

Inside everyone in this great Hall today, and everyone listening around the globe, there is the heart of a patriot that feels the same powerful love for your nation and the same intense loyalty to your homeland. The passion that burns in the hearts of patriots and the souls of nations has inspired reform and revolution, sacrifice and selflessness, scientific breakthroughs and magnificent works of art. Our task is not to erase it, but to embrace it — to build with it, to draw on its ancient wisdom and to find within it the will to make our nations greater, our regions safer and the world better.

To unleash that incredible potential in our people, we must defend the foundations that make it all possible. Sovereign and independent nations are the only vehicles where freedom has ever survived, democracy has ever endured and peace has ever prospered. And so we must protect our sovereignty and our cherished independence above all. When we do, we will find new avenues for cooperation unfolding before us. We will find a new passion for peacemaking rising within us. We will find new purpose, new resolve and new spirit flourishing all around us and making this a more beautiful world in which to live.

Together let us choose a future of patriotism, prosperity and pride. Let us choose peace and freedom over domination and defeat. Let us come here to this place to stand up for our people and their nations — forever strong, forever sovereign, forever just and forever thankful for the grace, goodness and glory of God. God bless you and God bless the nations of the world.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the United States of America for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Donald Trump, President of the United States of America, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

The meeting was suspended at 11.15 a.m. and resumed at 11.20 a.m.

Address by Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Turkey.

Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Erdoğan (*spoke in Turkish; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): I have the honour to greet you personally, Madam President, on behalf of my country and my people.

At the outset, I would like to thank His Excellency Mr. Miroslav Lajčák for his successful work over the past year as the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-second session. I would also like to congratulate Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, who has taken over the presidency of the General Assembly. I hope and pray that this year's General Assembly session will avail us of an opportunity to bring the best to all people of the world.

We are holding this meeting on the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War. The League of Nations, which was founded after the war, was immediately replaced by the United Nations in the aftermath of the Second World War. Undoubtedly, the United Nations, over its 73 years of history, has carried out enormous endeavours and achieved great successes. However, we also need to admit the fact that over time the capacity of the United Nations to meet the expectations of humankind for peace and welfare has diminished.

In particular, the Security Council has taken to serving only the interests of its five permanent seat-holders, which have veto rights, while standing by idly in the face of oppression in other parts of the world. The massacres in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rwanda and Somalia, and recently in Myanmar and occurring in Palestine as we speak, have all taken place before the eyes of the Security Council. Those who remain silent in the face of the oppression of the Palestinians, those who have reduced humanitarian assistance for them,

are only increasing the courage of the oppressors. Even if the whole world turns its back, Turkey will continue to be on the side of the oppressed Palestinians and will protect the historical and legal status of our first qibla, which is Jerusalem.

Unfortunately, in many parts of the world, every day we confront scenes of ethnic cleansing and mass slaughter that none of us would wish to see. Likewise, from health to education, from food to culture, there is a high level of dissatisfaction in terms of the sum of the work undertaken by this huge Organization. We do not wish to see such an important structure turn into an organization with a constant reputation for failure and complaints. Therefore, on every occasion, we underline that there needs to be a comprehensive reform in the structure and functioning of the United Nations, particularly of the Security Council.

We believe that when we say "the world is greater than five" we are becoming the voice of the common conscience of the entire human race. The world is not the world of the times of the Second World War, nor of its aftermath. We have representatives from 194 countries under this roof. Why cannot 194 countries be represented at the Security Council? Why should they not, in a rotational manner, have their permanent seats in the Security Council? We have only five permanent seat-holders at the Security Council, and the remainder are just temporary with no power whatsoever.

Limiting the reform of the United Nations to the budget will neither contribute to the settlement of real problems nor make anybody happy or content. There is a need to increase the efficiency of the Organization, which I deem to be very important for the future of the world. That includes in the fundamental areas of social equality, development and security. We need to undertake many reforms.

When Turkey looks at the world — beginning with our own geography — we see that there are many important tasks to be undertaken by the United Nations. In our understanding, justice is above all, and it will bring order, salvation and happiness to the entire world. In our civilization we refer to a phenomenon known as the "circle of justice," which is based on a correct establishment and management of relations between the society, the law, the State, the power of the State, the economy and justice. The links of that circle are intertwined; however, those links are shattered regardless of where you go in the world today. That is why our world today is entrapped by political, social and economic instability and is constantly suffering.

To enable a peaceful and secure future for all, we have a duty to succeed in humankind's struggle, starting with the search for justice and ending with the establishment of justice. Today, when the assets of the wealthiest 62 people in the world amount to the assets of half of world's population of 3.6 billion people, it means there is a significant problem that we need to do something about. Every night 821 million people go to bed hungry; at the same time more than 672 million have been diagnosed with obesity. There is a problem with that. There are 258 million people across the world hitting the road in search for better conditions to live and survive. And there are 68 million displaced people around the world, which points to yet another outstanding problem that we need to do something about. There is a problem when the likelihood of early child mortality of a baby born in Africa is nine times greater than that of a baby born here.

The famous Islamic philosopher Rumi, who began shining a beacon from the city of Konya, in the heartland of Anatolia, in order to enlighten all souls across the world, once said that justice means restoring things to their proper place — that is. giving someone what he or she needs or desires. Let us establish a global administration system that will serve as a shield to protect the oppressed, the victimized, lending a helping hand to the hungry and the unsheltered, and thereby bringing hope to future generations.

Everything said from this rostrum, all the analyses and proposals that we come up with, will make sense only if we can put them into action. Again, according to the philosopher Rumi, an oppressor is someone who does not fulfil their duties vis-à-vis humankind. If we want to make the United Nations a source of justice instead of cruelty, we have to dedicate ourselves more fully to the tasks bestowed upon us.

Turkey is sustaining its efforts aimed at achieving a fairer world through its global humanitarian diplomacy. We are currently hosting 4 million refugees inside our borders, 3.5 million of whom came from Syria. On a global scale, this is unprecedented. Those refugees have access to all forms of services that one could ever need. So far, the Republic of Turkey has spent about $32 billion for the care of refugees. Furthermore, in cities such as Jarablus, Al-Rai and Afrin in Syria, which we previously secured, we have provided humanitarian

aid to millions of people in need just as has been done in the de-escalation zones that were recently declared in the city of Idlib.

The number of Syrian students attending school in Turkey is well above 600,000. Refugees in our country have access to all health-care services free of charge, just like any other Turkish citizen. In addition, we attend to all the needs of refugees in Turkish protection centres. However, so far, we have received only $600 million from international organizations and only €1.7 billion from the European Union (EU). Those funds are not going directly into the Turkish budget, but rather are being directly transferred to the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working for the refugees. The European Union previously pledged €3 billion to be allocated to Turkey, but that is now contingent upon the undertaking of specific projects. We continue providing our services to refugees every day without any preconditions or interruptions whatsoever. We expect more generous and flexible support to be provided to Turkey, especially by the EU, because we have prevented a large refugee influx to spill over into other parts of the world, in particular to Europe, thanks to the opportunities we have made available to refugees.

Furthermore, we are providing significant humanitarian development aid in all parts of the world, not just to refugees within or near our borders. As of this year, Turkey ranks sixth in the world in terms of total development aid and first in humanitarian assistance. Turkey ranks among the top donors in terms of development and humanitarian aid, as we are the seventeenth largest economy in the world. Our commitment is a strong expression of the degree of significance we attach to humanitarian aid and helping those in need.

As noted in the appeal by the General Assembly this year, our world needs global leadership and joint responsibility more than ever for peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies. Turkey has made substantial efforts in that direction within the United Nations. The Mediation for Peace initiative, which we launched together with Finland in 2010, is now supported by the Group of Friends of Mediation, which consists of 56 Member States. We have also taken serious steps forward in that regard within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, over which we currently preside.

The Alliance of Civilizations initiative, which we launched with Spain, has become a United Nations initiative with the participation of 146 Member States. In helping Somalia, which is struggling with hunger, get back on its feet, we are currently implementing a development programme that I believe will be a model for the rest of the world. And to help millions of innocent people in Arakan, which is miles away from our country, we have mobilized all our means and all our capabilities. We have exerted sincere efforts to resolve the Gulf crisis. In Iraq, we are encouraging all parties to make efforts to secure the future of the country. In terms of racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia, we strive to prevent negativity from emerging in various parts of the world, especially in Europe.

We have also adopted an active stance in response to the developments taking place in Syria, which has now become a place where the majority of the countries in the world export the radical groups residing within their borders. By means of both our support to the Geneva and Astana processes and the de-escalation zones that have been established, we continue to try to bring peace and stability to Syria, and we are trying to make Syria a peaceful country once again. By clearing the Jarablus and Al-Rai regions of the presence of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham and the Afrin region from the presence of the Kurdistan Workers Party, the Democratic Union Party and the People's Protection Units — terrorist organizations all — we have turned an area of more than 4,000 square kilometres into a safe and peaceful place for millions of Syrians.

Quite recently, we signed an agreement with Russia, the Sochi Agreement, through which we have prevented the regime's bloody assaults against the de-escalation zones in Idlib province, where 3.5 million civilians live. It is our belief that, by preventing a repetition of the massacres previously carried out in Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Dar'a and eastern Ghouta, Turkey has cleared the way for peace and a political solution in the country, especially in the Idlib. Our goal is to clear the Syrian territory of the presence of terrorists, all the way from Manbij to the Iraqi border. I hereby call upon all the parties to support a just and sustainable political solution in Syria through a constructive approach. We wish to see a principled approach taken against all terrorist organizations.

Those who equip terrorists with tens of thousands of trucks and thousands of cargo planes loaded with arms and ammunition for the sake of their tactical interests

will most definitely feel sorrow and regret in future for having done so. Supporting terrorist organizations and closing borders to refugees, all the while putting the entire burden on a few countries like Turkey, will not give the world a more secure or prosperous future. On the contrary, issues deflected in such a way will reach a point where one day the measures at hand will fall short of overcoming them. So let us make more sincere and constructive efforts aimed at finding solutions in regions currently in conflict, such as Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, Afghanistan and Ukraine, as well as in regions potentially in conflict, such as the Balkans, the Caucusus, North Africa, Central Africa, the Gulf and the eastern Mediterranean. Let us not forget that, if we cannot create a minimum level of peace and prosperity for all in every part of the world, no one can live safely within their own borders.

Not all terrorist organizations obtain their power solely from their armed actions. Some of them use more complex, more convert and more deceptive methods. The Fethullah terrorist organization attempted a coup on the night of 15 July 2016, and, in the end, 251 Turkish civilians were martyred and more than 2,193 civilians were wounded. That is the sort of terrorist organization I was referring to just now. The Fethullah terrorist organization is hiding behind such glossy concepts as education, welfare and dialogue, and it continues its operations as NGOs or businesses. The leader of this terrorist organization is currently living in very comfortable fashion in Pennsylvania, on more than 400 acres of land.

For the last four decades, this terrorist organization has been growing and developing in Turkey through deception, and we saw its true face when the terrorists felt that they had become powerful enough to undertake coups d'état. They initiated consecutive attempts, first with their operatives who had infiltrated the police and the judiciary in Turkey, and then with their agents in the armed forces. With the economic and bureaucratic power they attained over time, that terrorist organization has attempted to take control of politics, society and the State itself. However, thanks to the support of our people and to our resolute fight against the Fethullah terrorist organization over the past five years, we have eliminated the majority of members of that organization in our country. We can now see that this terrorist organization is carrying out similar activities across the globe. We are warning many countries that are friends of Turkey around the world and demanding the extradition of the terrorists hiding within their borders, but some of those countries are shying away from extraditing them. Ultimately, however, the price for such a failure will be quite hefty.

The Fethullah terrorist organization is generating between $700 million and $800 million in the United States through their charter schools located in different states throughout the country. That figure does not include the income generated by commercial institutions involved in all sorts of money laundering activities and other structures with secret agendas that appear to be NGOs. I am hurt, and that is why I am frankly warning countries that are friends of Turkey around the world. I invite them to mobilize their efforts to combat the presence of the Fethullah terrorist organization in their countries. We must show the same solidarity that we have shown with regard to armed terrorist organizations and bloodthirsty regimes with regard to that insidious gang as well. We are ready to share our experiences and the information we have gathered on that issue with countries that are friends of Turkey and any country that is willing to cooperate with us more closely.

Trade wars have harmed humankind in every age. We are on the brink of another such frightening war. None of us can remain silent in the face of arbitrary cancellations of commercial agreements, the spreading prevalence of protectionism and the use of economic sanctions as weapons. The negative effects of those twisted developments will eventually affect all countries. We must all work together to prevent damage to the world trade regime as a result of unilateral decisions in the form of sanctions. At a time when we need to work towards the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, no one wants the world to experience a new economic rupture.

It is easy to create chaos, but it is difficult to restore order. Today, unfortunately, some countries are persistently trying to create chaos. There is no bigger danger than a world order that has lost mercy, conscience, truth and hope. That is the danger we are facing now. Turkey has always been in favour of both free trade and the free movement of persons and goods. Every regression in those areas has negative repercussions that will be hard to overcome for future generations. Furthermore, the fact that this approach is brought up with a rhetoric of threat, force and by entirely disregarding the history of bilateral relations disappoints us even more. We are in favour of solving our problems through constructive dialogue on equal

terms. We expect responsible action by all our friends around the world.

We have effective, harmonious and constructive cooperation with our counterparts on international platforms, such as the World Trade Organization, the Group of 20, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the European Union in the form of the Customs Union. Turkey has always expressed its support for a win-win approach to those we do business with around the world. The sincerity of our approach is obvious, which is why we deem the allegations against and pressure on our country unfair. We believe that, together with the countries and institutions sharing our perspective, we can surmount the political and economic chaos that the world is being drawn into. We hope to receive the international community's support in that respect.

Before concluding my address, I would like to share with the Assembly two additional remarks.

First, we believe that there is a need for an institution within the United Nations for youth, as young people ensure the sustainability of our future. Turkey proposes the establishment of a United Nations youth organization as soon as possible, and suggests Istanbul, a city that symbolizes the history of the world, as its headquarters. We can allocate a youth centre, which is currently being built in Istanbul, to that organization.

Secondly, in 2005, we hosted the world ageing summit in Turkey for the first time, and then 2019 was designated the International Year of Older Persons. In that respect, the United Nations international agency for the elderly is being established in Istanbul, and the third World Assembly on Ageing will take place in Istanbul. I cordially invite representatives to attend that summit, which will be held on 10 December.

Once again, I wish every success to the General Assembly during its seventy-third session. On behalf of myself and my country, I wholeheartedly salute with respect all the countries and peoples represented in this common parliament of humankind. May they prevail in peace and in health.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Turkey for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Rwanda.

Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Kagame: As we gather in this Hall and work together to make the United Nations more relevant to all people, the positive developments in Africa over the past year merit this body's attention. Let me start with a paradox.

In no other region is the sense of transnational solidarity and unity as deeply felt as in Africa. The idea that our respective national identities stand in contradiction to pan-Africanism is unheard of in our context. And yet, despite that unique civic endowment, Africa has too often stood out for division and dysfunction in practice. That left Africa unable to articulate and advance its common interests. We ceded responsibility for our future to others not by force but by default.

Mr. Bahr Aluloom (Iraq), Vice-President, took the Chair.

But times are changing rapidly, and therefore the management of Africa's global position must also change. The trend on our continent is towards closer and more productive cooperation, both through the African Union and our regional economic communities. The evident decline of old certainties and authorities is not bringing turbulence to Africa, as would have been the case in a previous era. On the contrary, the effect has been to focus Africa's attention on the urgent need to get our house in order and fundamentally change how we do business. That is why the African Union initiated a major financial and institutional reform more than three years ago. We are already seeing practical results.

New financial discipline has produced an African Union budget that is 12 per cent lower than last year's. The share of funding supplied by member States has also

increased substantially. Contributions to the fund that helps pay for African Union peace support operations are at the highest level since its establishment, in 1993. And earlier this year, the historic agreement on the African Continental Free Trade Area was signed, which was the culmination of decades of effort. Once that is in force, Africa's place in the global economic and trade architecture will be redefined.

Economies of scale and higher levels of intra-African trade will help our continent attain the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. We will also see new possibilities for public-private partnership with Africa's growing private sector. This year also provided examples of regional security affairs and key political transitions being handled in a peaceful and forward-looking manner. More effective consultation and leadership is reducing the need for external mediation, and that is how it should be.

The momentous developments in the Horn of Africa — in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and even Somalia — are the most remarkable. The region's leaders deserve our full support as they set aside decades of mistrust and work towards a comprehensive settlement. It is important for the Security Council to collaborate closely with the African Union to accompany that process of normalization.

In Zimbabwe as well, the next stages on the country's path of progress warrant steady encouragement from the international community. However, there are other situations in Africa — notably in the Central African Republic, Libya, the Sahel and South Sudan — where serious problems remain unresolved, despite so much potential. Africa and the world should come together and do what needs to be done to harmonize overlapping initiatives and ensure that agreements are respected.

Peace and security are the foundation of economic and social well-being. Yesterday we happily marked the centenary of Nelson Mandela's birth with the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit. In that spirit, we are already set to embark upon a new chapter, with cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations on stable funding for African-Union-mandated peace-support operations. The draft resolution to be introduced by Africa's three Security Council members has the full backing of the African Union. That step will also align with the Secretary-General's new Action for Peacekeeping initiative. That once again reflects the fact that the dividend of a more focused and functional Africa benefits everyone.

In that wider context of even stronger partnership between our institutions, it is important for the African Union's diplomatic representation here at the United Nations to be accorded the status and weight enjoyed by other regional bodies. The theme for this year's general debate is "Making the United Nations relevant to all people". That requires a commitment to achieving real multilateralism where it has too often been lacking. The current two-track system of global governance is unsustainable. A few get to be the ones to define the norms by which others shall be judged. But standards that do not apply to everyone equally are not universal. Addressing that imbalance in the very foundation of our system is what will give shape to a revival of multilateral cooperation and renew the legitimacy of the international institutions that are so crucial to our planet's future.

In the years ahead, we look forward to deepening the important partnership between Africa and the United Nations and to advancing our shared agenda of peace and security, gender equality and women's empowerment, environmental protection and shared prosperity.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Rwanda for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, President of the United Mexican States

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the United Mexican States.

Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, President of the United Mexican States, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, President of the United Mexican States, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Peña Nieto: I congratulate Ambassador María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés on her election as President of the General Assembly. I welcome the fact that, for the first time in history, a Latin American woman is presiding over the work of the Assembly.

Since the founding of the Organization, Mexico has demonstrated its willingness to help make the ideals that gave rise to its creation into a reality. As Mexicans, we are aware of our responsibilities as a nation that is part of a community of sovereign and independent States. Successive generations have managed to build Mexico into a democratic and pluralistic State, a free and participatory society and a dynamic economy open to the world. At the same time, we have contributed to deliberations and action focused on the great challenges facing the international community in the quest for peace and security, the promotion of sustainable development and respect for human rights. Those are universal values that have inspired and guided Mexico's efforts to overcome the challenges facing our society.

With the commitment and cooperation of the three branches of our Government, various political parties, civil-society organizations and representatives of the various economic sectors, Mexico is moving forward towards improved levels of wealth and development. We have striven to strengthen our institutions and protect our society from the threat of crime and violence in the quest for a Mexico living in peace. We have worked to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable groups by reducing poverty levels and building an inclusive Mexico. We have transformed the Mexican educational system so that it can provide the children and young people of the country with quality education that will prepare them for a successful and happy life. We have removed barriers that, for decades, impeded full economic development, thereby fuelling a prosperous Mexico. We have taken an active role in finding solutions to international challenges, which is fitting for one of the 10 most populous countries, one of the 15 largest economies in the world, and a responsible global actor.

My country has made a sense of responsibility the watchword of its foreign policy. Mexico has acted responsibly in promoting sustainable development, which benefits everyone. For that reason, we have established an institutional architecture, in cooperation with the federal executive power, to promote the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Together with other countries represented in this Hall, we have promoted the annual assessment of the impact of rapid technological change, especially artificial intelligence, on the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

The implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change is a priority for my country. All as an international community, we have a moral obligation to put its precepts into practice and meet even more ambitious mitigation, adaptation and financing goals. Mexico has acted responsibly in seeking fair solutions to the challenges posed by migration. I welcome the progress that we have made in achieving the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. Based on the new development paradigm, the Permanent Representatives of Mexico and Switzerland have worked over the past two years with States, civil-society organizations, international organizations and academia to establish the following guiding principles of the pact: respect for the human rights of all migrants regardless of their immigration status, shared responsibility and unrestricted respect for the sovereignty of States, among others. The upcoming official adoption of that instrument in Marrakech in December will allow us to rely on a foundational document for the international governance of migration.

Mexico has acted responsibly in promoting international peace and security. Following a hiatus of more than two decades, Mexico has resumed its participation in peacekeeping operations. In recent years, we have contributed to operations deployed in Africa, the Middle East and Latin America and the Caribbean. Mexico also has made its mark in its struggle for the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear disarmament. Accordingly, we initiated and supported the process concluded in 2017 with the negotiation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which Mexico ratified in January. We urge all Member States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay.

Weapons of mass destruction are not the only threat to society. The illicit trade in weapons is one of the greatest challenges to national security that Mexico, like many other countries, has had to face. I say this in no uncertain terms — given its serious nature, trafficking in illicit weapons is a scourge that we must urgently address. One important step to advance that struggle was the negotiation and adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty. The first Conference of States Parties to the Treaty was held in Mexico in 2015. We must now work on its implementation. The outcome of the 2018

special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem was a watershed in the international drug-control system. Its implementation will allow us to move from mere prohibition to effective regulation that combines prevention, public health and human rights approaches.

Mexico has acted responsibly in the promotion of human rights. We acknowledge that our country continues to face major challenges in terms of human rights, and we have therefore implemented specific public policies to address them. Mexico has maintained its openness to international scrutiny, as we know that it serves as a useful tool to strengthen our national legal frameworks and promote human rights in the country. In its efforts to promote human rights, the international community must continue to promote respect for fundamental democratic principles throughout the world. The usurpation of powers, the systematic violation of political rights, the rupture of the democratic order and the humanitarian crisis prevailing in some areas of the American continent are issues that deeply concern us. Mexico will pursue its best diplomatic efforts to ensure that democracy, peace and respect for human rights are restored in all corners of the continent. We will always seek peaceful solutions agreed by the citizens of those countries, in full respect for the principle of non-intervention.

As it has argued consistently in the past, Mexico today reiterates its call for an end to the commercial and financial blockade of Cuba. Mexico believes that solutions to problems must be found through dialogue and negotiations. I am convinced that the end of the blockade would benefit the entire region.

In the international arena today, we have seen trends that seemed to have been overcome and that in the past were shown to run contrary to the interests of development, such as advocacy for exclusionary nationalisms, the return of protectionist trade practices and the questioning and erosion of multilateralism. Such policies promote exclusion — the political exclusion of minorities, the social exclusion of vulnerable groups, the economic exclusion of those less fortunate and the cultural exclusion of those who live or think differently.

Faced with such worrying trends, I reaffirm before this universal forum the importance of multilateralism and international cooperation for Mexico. Experience shows that multilateralism is the best way to defend the sovereignty and dignity of every State, while at the same time contributing to the security and well-being of the community of nations. For that reason, all the Members of the Organization must confirm their trust in and commit themselves to strengthening it.

Specifically, Mexico calls on Member States, first, to achieve a consensus for the comprehensive reform of the Security Council that would strengthen multilateralism, not create new permanent members and establish longer terms for non-permanent members; secondly, to ensure that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which constitutes a true international social charter for the twenty-first century, becomes an effective global guide to ensure that no one is left behind; thirdly, to strengthen the human rights regime throughout the world — we are confident that the appointment of Ms. Michelle Bachelet as United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights will strengthen that important pillar of the Organization; and, fourthly, to comply fully with the relevant Security Council resolutions to safeguard international peace and security. We are encouraged by the progress in the dialogue between the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. At the same time, we reiterate the call for compliance with the relevant Security Council resolutions on the complete denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

My country is currently undergoing a period of democratic transition between Governments. Marked by unconditional respect for the political and economic freedoms of Mexico's citizens, the change in Administrations is taking place in an environment of certainty, order, economic stability and social peace. As I am just a few weeks from completing my term as President of Mexico, this will be my last statement in the largest forum of the international community. During the past six years, I have found that dialogue, cooperation and an international system based on rules are our best option to achieve just, shared and lasting solutions to global challenges.

Building a world of peace, friendship and international cooperation has never been an easy task. There are those who opt for exclusion and discord. There are also those who choose to be mere observers instead of true agents of change. Those alternatives are contrary to the spirit of harmony and universal fraternity that inspires the members of the Assembly. The Organization is the best indication that it is well worth fighting for a more peaceful, secure, inclusive, egalitarian, developed and sustainable world. The

challenges facing the international community compel us to remain faithful to the ideals that inspired the founding of the Organization and to continue building on the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Let us all fulfil responsibly the commitments that our States have assumed individually for the benefit of every nation and, at the same time, of the international community as a whole.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the United Mexican States for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, President of the United Mexican States, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the French Republic.

Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Macron (*spoke in French*): All of us here are heirs to the great hope to save future generations from the scourge of war, to build an international order based on law and respect for one's word, and to lead humankind towards economic, social and moral progress in increasingly secure freedom. We have seen results. The enjoyment of human rights has spread, trade and prosperity have grown, and poverty has declined. That has been our achievement of the past several decades.

We must, however, look honestly at the moment in which we are living. We are experiencing today a deep crisis in the liberal Westphalian international order, which we have known. First, that is because, in part, it has failed to regulate itself, and to date no solution commensurate with the task of meeting its economic, financial, environmental and climatic failures has been found. Secondly, it is because our collective capacity to respond to crises too often continues to be hindered by divisions within the Security Council. Our Organization is too often reduced to deploring the violations of rights that it has pledged to guarantee. Seventy years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the General Assembly in Paris, a cultural, historical and religious relativism is now challenging the foundations of their universality.

Born of hope, the United Nations can become, like the League of Nations that preceded it, the symbol of powerlessness. We need not look far to see who is responsible for that crime. They are in this Assembly Hall. They are speaking today. We, the leaders, are responsible. On that basis, I see three main paths for us to follow.

The first path is to think that this is just a passing moment, a historical parenthesis before we return to life as normal. I do not believe that to be the case. I do not believe it because we are going through a crisis of effectiveness and principles in our contemporary world order, which will not be able to restore its previous landmarks and modes of functioning. This moment in time is not a parenthesis; it is a manifestation of our own failures of the past.

The second path would be that of the law of the strongest. Everyone is tempted to follow their own law. That path — the path of unilateralism — leads directly to isolation and conflict, to widespread clashes with everyone pitted against each other, to the detriment of all, even ultimately those who believe themselves to be the strongest. The responsibility for peace cannot be delegated; it cannot be refused; it cannot be pre-empted. It must be exercised collectively.

The law of the strongest does not protect any people from any threat, be it chemical or nuclear. What will truly resolve the situation in Iran and what has already begun to stabilize it? Was it the law of the strongest, the pressure of one individual? No. We know that Iran was on the path to military nuclear power, but what stopped it was the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action agreed in Vienna in 2015. Today, as I said a year ago (see A/72/PV.4), we must not exacerbate regional tensions, but rather put forth a broader agenda that addresses all the nuclear, ballistic and regional concerns caused by Iranian policies. We must do so through dialogue and multilateralism, without naivety or complacency, but also without posturing, which would be pointless.

The problem of trade imbalances and their consequences for our societies will be solved by common rules adapted to today's reality that make it possible to ensure fair competition on an equal footing, and under no circumstances will a bilateral approach to all our trade disputes or new protectionism do so.

What will resolve the crisis between Israel and Palestine is definitely not unilateral initiatives, or ignoring Palestinians' legitimate right to lasting peace, or underestimating Israelis' legitimate right to their security. There is no credible alternative to two States living side by side in peace and security, with Jerusalem as their capital. Israel knows that France is unwavering in its friendship, and it is in the name of that friendship that I call for a quick end to the policy of faits accomplis that threaten the very possibility of reaching a peace agreement. Continuing along that path would be a mistake. On that issue, I am ready, and we must all stand ready, to move beyond dogmas and historical positions in order to take new initiatives, on the condition that it leads to positive changes on the ground. There too, the law of the strongest will only exacerbate frustration and violence. As the Assembly has seen, in the face of contemporary imbalances, I do not believe in the law of the strongest, even if it is masked in a form of legitimacy where it has actually lost all claims to legality.

I believe that there is a third possible path ahead of us, probably the most difficult and the most demanding, which requires us to forge a new model and to find a new global balance together. After the Second World War, a balance was built bloc by bloc over the course of decades. Then there was the emergence of a model based on hyperpower. For several years now, we have witnessed a new global instability characterized by the return of multiple centres of power.

The new balance that we must create must be based on new forms of regional and international cooperation and will, in my opinion, be structured around three principles. The first is respect for sovereignty, which is at the very heart of the Charter of the United Nations. The second is the strengthening of our regional cooperation. The third is the provision of more robust international guarantees or safeguards. It is through that method, and on the basis of those three principles, that we must manage contemporary crisis situations.

In Syria, we are pursuing the fight against Islamist terrorism. The military engagements of some countries have allowed the regime to recover at the expense of crimes for which those responsible will one day have to account. The Syrian people have, tragically, paid the price, and there will be no winners in a Syria in ruins. What is needed now is to win peace under the auspices of the United Nations. We cannot decide for the Syrian people, but we must rather build the ways and means of the method that I have just defined and thereby build a solution supported not only by the Astana guarantors, but also by other States of the region and the international community through the Small Group on Syria, under the coordination of the United Nations and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, in order to create the means both to resolve the humanitarian crisis and to build an inclusive, lasting political solution through constitutional reform and the holding of free elections. That is what it means to truly respect Syrian sovereignty. It is neither a substitute for the Syrian people in deciding who should be their leader nor an agreement to cover all crimes by accepting that this leader will remain until the end of time, considering that all principles and, ultimately, all law have been cast aside.

In Libya, too, it is that new method that should enable us to achieve a lasting solution. The current status quo allows militias and traffickers to gain ground, which destabilizes the entire region. We will not give the Libyans a way out of the crisis if we remain divided and if Libya becomes a stage, as it still is too often, for confrontations among foreign influences. In Paris, the Libyans recently pledged to hold early elections, which will make it possible to reunify State institutions. Those commitments must be fulfilled under the auspices of the United Nations and in close cooperation with the African Union. Yesterday, an important step was taken that I wish to commend here. It is in the interests of Libyans, their neighbours, Europeans and the international community, who must be united around those objectives to move forward in that way.

We are all strong together in the face of terrorism when States are able to count on their own forces to ensure their security and when such security is based on regional and international solutions, in accordance with the principle I have justset out. That is the decision taken by the States of the Sahel, acting together in the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel. That was also the essence of the process launched by the African Union to better assume its responsibilities by deploying

African peacekeeping operations. That is the essence of the initiatives undertaken in the Lake Chad region, together with Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon, with the support of the African Union. That is why we must support the African Union's initiative and push for better coordination between the African Union and the United Nations. I hope that, by the end of the year, a resolution can be adopted to that effect.

We are strong in the face of terrorism when we take joint responsibility to fight all its forms of financing, and when, as we do in the Alliance for the Sahel, we act together for development, agriculture and education, and against the root causes of despair that have allowed terrorists to win hearts and minds. Some $7.5 billion has already been committed to 500 projects defined jointly with all the States concerned and the partners of the Alliance for the Sahel. We must consolidate those initial results.

As is evident from each of these crises, the answer has not been to leave States alone, to act for them or to proclaim from here the law or solution to be applied, but to know how to conscientiously articulate the principles of the sovereignty of peoples, regional cooperation and the real commitment of the international community. Those three principles form the basis for modern solutions. Only collective action can preserve the sovereignty and equality of the peoples that have given us a mandate. We also need collective action in the face of the demographic, climate and digital challenges before us, which none of us can face alone.

Confronted with the great challenges posed by migration, I do not believe in talk of unconditional openness, which only sparks concern and stokes intolerance. Nor do I believe in the misleading speeches of those who claim, for example, in Europe as elsewhere, that they will be safer behind the protection of a closed border. That is not true. The only effective way to manage the migratory flows affecting all our continents in an organized and controlled manner is to create the conditions for elective rather than forced international mobility, to work together — countries of origin, transit and destination — to address the root causes of migration, especially for its victims, to dismantle trafficking networks that are the worst scourge of this phenomenon, and to protect our borders in a respectful manner while ensuring compliance with international law and, in particular, the unconditional protection of those who are entitled to asylum. That is what we have decided to do together through the United Nations pact that is to be adopted in Marrakech in December, which I support.

With regard to climate change, too, there are no free rides or easy solutions either. Even those who have challenged that reality suffer its consequences like everyone else. Extreme weather events are now a daily occurrence. And by weakening collective action, some only expose themselves further.

As for the great digital transformation, here too our duty is to stand together to build modern rules that will allow us to reconcile the development of artificial intelligence with our ethical rules in order to support the digital transformation of our societies.

I firmly believe in the sovereignty of peoples, which today is strong and demanded by all our peoples in the international arena. It also enjoys enhanced cooperation in many forms and a renewed legitimacy of international commitment. The great fight of our elders was achieving peace, and this remains one of our responsibilities. We will win that fight in the twenty-first century only by restoring a robust multilateralism that is truly capable not only of resolving conflicts pragmatically but, also and more broadly, of addressing their causes.

To tell the truth, I do not believe in one great globalized people. That is an illusion. It does not exist. But I do believe in universal values, and on that point we must not compromise. It is not the same thing. I believe in the non-negotiable defence of our values: human rights, the dignity of individuals and gender equality. I believe in our ability to strike a balance that respects peoples and cultures by refusing to negotiate those universal values. That is the reality, and I will in no way leave the principle of the sovereignty of peoples in the hands of nationalists or those who today, before the international community, advocate withdrawal and wish to exploit the sovereignty of peoples to challenge the universality and strength of our values, thanks to which we are all gathered here together in this Hall.

All of us here, even those who criticize it, have benefited from the structuring of the international order that has accompanied globalization. We have enjoyed a period of humanism and have all played a role in making it happen. Today, we must tackle the root causes of our imbalances. Together, we must face the weaknesses of our international order and, beyond the crises I have just mentioned, consider the deep inequalities that have taken root. In my view, that is the

heart of our problem today. What awakens nationalism? What gives rise to doubt in our Assembly? What gives rise crises everywhere? It is those deep inequalities that we have failed to address.

Ten years ago, when the international financial crisis hit, we took emergency action, but we did not solve the root cause. We did not curb the trend of hyperconcentration of wealth on our planet, and we did not truly provide a response to all those left behind by globalization. All those who were marginalized now hold a grudge because of the humiliations they suffered or have been plunged into despair, for which we are now collectively paying the price. We owe all those people a response.

We owe a response to the 265 million children who do not have access to school, more than half of whom live in sub-Saharan Africa, and to the young girls who have equal access to education in less than 40 per cent of countries.

We owe a response to the 700 million children who live in the regions most exposed to the consequences of climate change — the victims of floods, droughts, rising sea levels and the depletion of resources.

We owe a response to the 200 million women who do not have access to contraception, to the more than 1 billion women who are not protected by law if they are victims of violence in their homes, and to all women whose global average pay is 23 per cent less than men and up to 40 per cent in rural areas.

We owe a response to the 783 million people living below the poverty line, to those suffering from hunger or chronic malnutrition and to those who do not have access to basic health care.

We owe a response to the aspirations of the most important generation of young people in history — our own young people — amounting to nearly 2 billion people who are now between the ages of 10 and 24, and 90 per cent of whom live in developing countries.

We owe a response to all those who look to us because their destiny depends on what we are or are not able to do here together in the Assembly. And those who forget that we owe an answer to all those people are wrong because they are sowing the seeds for tomorrow's crises and because they will leave their children and ours in a much worse situation than we are in today.

We have made great progress in reducing inequalities among our countries, and we have created the framework for that in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, but the fight is not behind us. It is far from over. Wealth per capita is 50 times higher in the countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development than in low-income countries. Do we think that we can sustainably increase stability and balance in this state of affairs? No, we must take action. That is why, as I announced here last year (see A/72/PV.4), I have decided to increase France's official development assistance by €1 billion starting in 2019. Our humanitarian funding will increase by 40 per cent. But it is also why the fight against inequality will be the priority of the French presidency of the Group of Seven (G-7) summit in 2019. After Canada, whose leadership I applaud, France will assume the G-7's next presidency. I would like to have a major reconsideration of its format in order to improve its association with various other Powers and devise new ways to coordinate.

I also wanted it to be at the United Nations that I made the first announcement that the inequality agenda will be at the centre of the next G-7, and also that I intend to report on the results of the Biarritz G-7 next September, because the time when a club of rich countries could define the balances of power in the world by itself has long since passed and because it is impossible to separate the fate of each of its members from that of all the States members of the Assembly. We must tackle modern inequalities today because they are at the root of the evil that I denounced at the beginning of my statement. We must address inequalities of opportunity, which are a moral aberration and an unsustainable reality. We cannot accept a world in which people do not have the same opportunities because of the country where they were born, or cannot go to school in certain countries because they are women, or do not have access to basic services.

We kept the commitment made here last year with the President of Senegal. The Global Partnership for Education Financing Conference, held in February in Dakar, raised $2.5 billion to increase access to education around the world. That is a historic amount. France has increased its contribution tenfold. The mobilization of the G-7 already begun under the Canadian presidency should make it possible to go even further. We are at a key moment on this issue that will decide whether or not we are capable of dealing with the challenge we

face. Between now and 2030 there will be 620 million more children needing schooling worldwide, including 444 million Africans. Are we going to provide for that? Are we going to give them all that they need for a solid foundation that will enable them to be agents for their own lives, to live as brothers in tomorrow's world? If not, what kind of world are we creating? That is why I have committed France to this fight and why I insist so much on teacher training, vocational training and gender equality in education. That is why I urge everyone here to join in this great global surge for education. Education and health will not only be the pillars of our societies in the twenty-first century, they will be the fundamental building blocks of our economies.

We must also fight diligently against gender inequality. In France I have made this the signature issue of my five-year term, and I am launching an appeal here to make it a major global issue. Women and girls are the first of us to be affected by poverty, conflict and the consequences of global warming. They are the primary victims of gender-based and sexual violence, which too often hinders their freedom of movement and their ability to work and have control over their bodies. It is our responsibility in the twenty-first century to put an end to such violence, from street harassment to femicide. It is time for our world to stop victimizing women and finally make a place for them, one that they deserve, one where they can be leaders. We must ensure that they have access to education, health care, employment and economic and political decision-making everywhere, and we must fight all forms of violence against them. France therefore proposes to those Governments that want to move forward with us the creation of a coalition for enacting new legislation on equality between women and men. Fifty per cent of our development assistance will be devoted to projects aimed at reducing gender inequality.

We must also mobilize against health inequality at the international level. In Lyon in 2019 we will host the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Replenishment Conference. We will take up the initiative on the fight against counterfeit medicines and will intensify our response to major pandemics. I call on everyone here to mobilize.

Lastly, we must fight urgently, body and soul, against environmental inequality. It is unacceptable that 45 per cent of greenhouse-gas emissions are produced by 10 per cent of the planet's richest inhabitants. As is the case with solar energy, we have an inefficient situation when the countries with the greatest potential and needs have the least access to appropriate technologies. It is unsustainable that 100 million more people will be condemned to extreme poverty by 2030 if we fail to meet our commitments to fighting global warming. Here too we must be united in combat. Some countries represented here are suffering more than others, and we owe them our solidarity. But we will all be held accountable for the disasters that are multiplying before our very eyes, before our peoples and our own children. The proclaimed breakdown of the Paris Climate Change Agreement has been thwarted because we have been able to remain united, despite the decision of the United States to withdraw from it. That strength must continue to support us and help us to ward off all the fatalistic predictions.

We are told that solutions exist but that the funding is lacking. So let us go find it, let us innovate. This is what we did last year in Paris, on 12 December, with many of those gathered here, at the One Planet Summit, with concrete commitments and first results. That is what we did at the beginning of the year in Delhi, with the International Solar Alliance. That is what we will do again tomorrow in New York, at the second One Planet Summit. We are told that it is already too late, that we cannot meet the goals. So let us speed up, let us together adopt the rules for implementing the Paris Agreement in December at the 24th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Let us implement the protocol against hydrofluorocarbon gases, which could enable us to reduce the average global temperature by one degree by 2050. Let us set ourselves the goal of concluding an ambitious draft global environmental pact by 2020, and ensuring that the Beijing Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the 2020 International Union for Conservation of Nature World Conservation Congress in France will be decisive steps.

Let us make a clear commitment, and let us all be equally clear, concrete and consistent. This is an emergency. So let us honour the commitments we have made. Let us no longer sign trade agreements with Powers that do not respect the Paris Agreement. Let us ensure that our business commitments integrate our environmental and social constraints. Let us work harder to involve sovereign wealth funds and financiers in this low-carbon-policy strategy. France will continue to be a global leader in this fight alongside everyone who wants to join. We will work in the G-7 to ensure

that the commitments made at the 2015 Climate Change Conference are increased, and if one of our members does not want to move forward, we will move forward anyway by seeking new coalitions and new formats, because the G-7's mission is to remain a united group of countries committed to democracy. But today it must also contribute to the creation of new coalitions that will make it possible to improve and restructure the collective global system. So let us build new forms of cooperation to make progress and take decisions on those fundamental issues. Only together can we effectively fight the inequalities that have fractured all of our societies and that have fuelled mistrust and the temptation to withdraw — inequalities that we have allowed to grow and to which we have been collectively unable to respond effectively.

But none of us can effectively fight the inequalities I have decried if we act alone. If we do, there are essentially only two solutions. The first is to continually lower the bar and revert to the standards that we know, as we have been doing for decades. We have a trade war, so let us reduce workers' rights, keep cutting taxes and fuel our inequalities that way in an effort to respond to our trade problems. What does that lead to? It reinforces the inequalities in our societies and the disruption that we are living through. The alternative is to say that it is the rules that are not working, so we should retreat inwards towards isolationism and protectionism. But the only thing that leads to is heightened tensions, which do nothing to address serious inequalities.

What I am proposing instead is that we put in place a collective mechanism to enable us to work together on what we are doing in each of our countries to reduce inequalities, to evaluate our actions but also to coordinate them better and to disseminate best practices. I therefore propose that international institutions — the United Nations, but the OECD as well, of course — support us in setting up such a mechanism, for which the G-7 must be the driving force.

To defeat inequality, we must change our methods. First, we should revise both our trade and social rules. Rather than pursuing protectionism, we should all work together to thoroughly review the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules. We must restore the WTO's ability to resolve conflicts and establish rules for the unfair trade practices, non-compliance with intellectual property rights and forced technology transfers that make a level playing field impossible. Starting this year, the Group of Twenty summit in Argentina must provide us with a credible road map for rebuilding the WTO. That is also what we will have to do on the social front next year, during the centenary of the International Labour Organization.

Secondly, we must also change the modalities of our action, bringing into the scope of our collective action the major players who are not in this Hall or at the General Assembly, the big non-State actors who are helping to change the world but who do not participate enough in reducing the inequalities that these transformations bring, and by that I mean the major digital players, both in terms of taxation and of responsibility for combating the manipulation of information. We need to operate differently from our standard collective action where all our major challenges are concerned and include dialogue with these new private stakeholders and Internet giants.

Thirdly, we must enable Africa to take its rightful place so that it can play a central part in rebuilding the international system. It is not only on that continent that we will collectively win or lose our great battle against inequality — it is with that continent, because today it is in Africa that we find the most fervent defenders of multilateralism and regional integration. Our African partners have fully understood that we can only meet our common challenges together. And this new alliance with Africa will also be a focus of the French presidency of the G-7.

I firmly believe that despite these fractures and challenges in the modern world order, we can put together a new vocabulary for action while also addressing the root causes of inequality today. And it is the responsibility of France and all its European partners, of the European Union, to be in the vanguard in this fight, to build a new, modern humanism that refuses to yield to attempts to withdraw or to simple-mindedness and at the same time, as mediating Powers, to build these new rules for the international order.

At a time when our collective system is cracking, I have to say that we have never needed it so much. That is why we will support the agencies working on projects for peace and humanity — UNESCO, the conscience of the United Nations; the Human Rights Council; the International Criminal Court; the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, to which we will increase our contribution — because, I want to remind the Assembly, we are simply talking about enabling

hundreds of thousands of children to go to school, nothing less, nothing more.

We will defend expanding both member categories of the Security Council so that its composition reflects today's balances of power and so that it is strengthened as a forum for consultation rather than obstruction. We will ensure that by the end of the year, two thirds of the members of the General Assembly can support limiting the right of veto in the case of mass atrocities. We will defend international humanitarian law by supporting staff who take extraordinary risks to help civilians on the ground by negotiating humanitarian access to all theatres, one by one.

On the seventieth anniversary of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we will remind the world that human rights are not a cultural thing. They are not simply values or revocable options, but a legal corpus enshrined in international treaties to which the members of the Assembly have freely consented. We will point out that their universality not only does not run counter to a people's sovereignty, it is rather the only way to ensure the preservation and exercise of those rights.

France will be there to ensure that the world does not forget that clashing nationalisms only plunge us into the abyss, that when democracies lack the courage to defend their principles, they are weak, and that accumulated resentments, backed only by a fragile international system, can result in a global unleashing of violence twice in the space of one human life. I am speaking from our own experience. In a few weeks' time, on 11 November, the Paris Peace Forum will present an opportunity for us to see a surge of thoughtfulness and courage as we attempt to rediscover what keeps us together here. For us, united by the tragedies of the twentieth century, it should be a time for renewal and to rediscover the oath we have taken to save future generations from the scourge of war. I want us and our counterparts to take on new responsibilities during the Forum in order to chart the way for concrete actions in the service of peace.

I know that many of us may be tired of multilateralism. In a world that is flooded with information and in which in a sense we are in a free-for-all, in which society is a reality show where it is fashionable and newsworthy to say the worst possible things, I know that denouncing the consequences of causes we have championed can be a successful political tactic and that defending cooperation and multilateralism may no longer be fashionable. Then let us not be fashionable, because we have a duty to those who have made it possible for us to sit in this Hall. Because we must never forget that the genocides that are the reason we are here today were fuelled by the speeches that we are growing accustomed to, by the political spectacles that we applaud. Because we are now seeing international law and every kind of cooperation disintegrate, as if it was nothing, out of fear and complicity and because it looks good.

But I will not do that. I will not do it, because I come from a country that helped to create the declarations that have brought us here, because I come from a country that stands tall, and while it has made many mistakes and done many bad things, it has been able to maintain a kind of universalism at every point in its own history and in international history. This is today. This is now. So we must not get used to it. We must not accept all these kinds of unilateralism. Every day pages are being ripped in a betrayal of our history. And I am not going to get used to it.

This is what I have to say, very clearly. This nascent century is watching us, and our children are waiting. We must resolve our crises. We must work together to combat all our inequalities, but let us do so on a human level and in full accord with our principles, our histories and our universalism. In any case, that is my commitment to everyone here, and I am counting on us all.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the French Republic for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Danny Faure, President of the Republic of Seychelles

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Seychelles.

Mr. Danny Faure, President of the Republic of Seychelles, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome

to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Danny Faure, President of the Republic of Seychelles, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Faure: Let me start by paying tribute to the statesmen and giants of history who have walked these halls and without whom our Organization would not be what it is today, a symbol of unity and cooperation for all the nations in the world. As we celebrate the anniversary of this great Organization, let us pause and reflect on the true purpose that lies at the heart of the United Nations. We must renew our commitment not only to the Charter of the United Nations, but to its founding principles, which must always guide us in our deliberations and actions. Those cooperative values are critical to the continued peace and prosperity of all our nations and peoples. We cannot let them come under threat. As a collective, we must continue to embrace multilateralism, which has underpinned the values of our Organization for nearly three quarters of a century.

Seychelles continues to embrace the multilateral system that is the United Nations, and we fully support the evolution and progress that will come out of United Nations reform. Those reforms stress the need for a more coordinated approach among the United Nations country teams in order to successfully deliver the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We consider multilateral cooperation to be of the utmost importance, and in that spirit, on 30 August the Government of Seychelles and its United Nations country team signed their first strategic partnership framework for the period from 2019 to 2023, defining the collective support of 18 United Nations agencies. The challenges that we face in the international system remain a vivid reminder of an evolving world to which we must adapt if we are to secure lasting peace and prosperity. Without targeted approaches that touch the lives of our most vulnerable peoples and without fully embracing the promise of the SDGs, we run the risk of leaving some behind.

Strong institutions are essential to a vibrant democracy in which there is transparency and accountability to the people. My mandate as President of Seychelles has in part been highlighted by my desire to ensure that our institutions not only serve the people but grant them the necessary recourse should they feel the need. Only by strengthening our institutions and binding ourselves to international law and norms can our peoples truly have accountable Governments. Today I call on the advanced economies to support the strengthening of institutions in developing nations, not through handouts, but by sharing expertise and best practices for the benefit of all. Only by strengthening institutions can we ensure respect for human rights, the rule of law and independent judiciaries, which in turn will ensure that the future can favour a vibrant democratic order.

Speaking from the standpoint of an islander, I cannot dissociate the concept of lasting peace and prosperity from the perils of climate change. Climate change has become an existential threat not merely to the lives of people in island States but to the world as a whole. As islanders, we live that stark reality every day. We see its effects in our eroding coastlines and unpredictable weather patterns, on our coral reefs and rising sea levels. While I recognize the need for development as a driving force to lift our people out of poverty, we must remain aware of its consequences for our planet and our future. Through our neglect, we risk our children inheriting a planet that is beyond their capacity to repair. Should we not uphold the commitments we have made — from the Paris Climate Change Conference to the Conference of the twenty-third session of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Bonn last year under Fiji's presidency — we will reach an inescapable crisis.

I believe in the power of our collective efforts to shape a future of which we can all be proud. In that context, I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to the theme of our seventy-third session, "Making the United Nations relevant to all people: global leadership and shared responsibility for peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies". The words "sustainable societies" have particular resonance for small island developing States (SIDS).

For our United Nations to be truly inclusive and keep up with the challenges of an ever-changing world, Seychelles aligns itself firmly with the African Union position calling for the long-overdue and comprehensive reform of the Security Council. That includes the equitable representation of Africa, whose countries make up more than a quarter of the members of the United Nations, after all.

Sustainability has always been and will continue to be at the heart of my country's development efforts. As a nation, we have shown the world our commitment to that process. Seychelles, alongside its fellow small island developing States, has been actively engaged in

that discourse in order to ensure that our concerns and needs are adequately addressed. Our nation was forged by the ocean. We are acutely aware of the challenges that poses with the threat of climate change. However, the ocean also presents a myriad untapped opportunities. At the beginning of this year, my country, Seychelles, pioneered a blue economy strategic policy framework and road map, to multiply the economic potential of our territorial waters while also protecting them for generations to come. For us, the blue economy is the next frontier of development. It is about ocean-based sustainable development focusing on economic diversification, shared prosperity, food security and healthy and productive oceans. It is encouraging to note that other like-minded States are developing that concept, regardless of their geography.

Seychelles is slowly shifting from a dependence on bilateral aid donors to developing innovative sources of financing for our emerging blue economy. We are trying to leverage the wealth of the ocean that surrounds us and engage in exciting new partnerships. Nevertheless, we recognize that will not be enough to meet all our sustainable-development and climate-action obligations under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway. That is why Seychelles is one of those small island developing States that continues to advocate for a SIDS-specific resilience index, which would take into account the unique vulnerabilities and specificities of small island developing States and better reflect the realities that we face. The agenda of small island developing States is inextricably linked to that of humankind.

The United Nations was born of the horrors of a destructive world war. It was charged with upholding the idea that as a collective, we could resolve our differences through dialogue and international diplomacy. Together, we continue to demonstrate the success and unrelenting power of diplomacy and, in the case of smaller States like ours, we have also proved that might is not right. In this unique forum, we have equal representation. Seychelles remains committed to the ideals of the United Nations and will remain an active voice within this Organization. Today we are being presented with a unique opportunity to transform our world through our collective efforts and to create lasting partnerships. We have a unique opportunity to sculpt a future for our children that they can be proud to inherit. Let us be on the right side of history and live up to the ideals out of which this Organization was born.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Seychelles for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Danny Faure, President of the Republic of Seychelles, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Martín Vizcarra Cornejo, President of the Republic of Peru

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Peru.

Mr. Martín Vizcarra Cornejo, President of the Republic of Peru, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Martín Vizcarra Cornejo, President of the Republic of Peru, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Vizcarra Cornejo (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I want to welcome Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, who is assuming the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, and to wish her a successful mandate. I am sure that her role will promote the multilateral system. She has Peru's support.

I assumed the presidency of Peru just six months ago, when my country was facing a serious political and institutional crisis that we dealt with by ensuring full respect for the provisions of our political Constitution, which made it possible to restore the democratic stability that my country had been longing for. A few days after my term began, we had the honour of welcoming the leaders of 30 countries to the eighth Summit of the Americas, which resulted in the signing of the Lima Commitment to democratic governance against corruption. The agreement consists of 57 specific measures and actions to strengthen the fight against corruption and regional cooperation in that fight, including increasing transparency, accountability and political parties' use of banks in their election campaigns, as well as a call to the countries in our

hemisphere to consider restricting access to public office for people convicted of corruption.

We are aware that corruption affects democratic governance and the rule of law. Nothing can be built on the basis of entities immersed in corruption. One of the first decisions that my Government took was therefore to establish an overall policy for the Government policy through 2021. Its main thrusts are integrity and the fight against corruption, as well as strengthening governance institutions. Within that framework, we have approved a 2018-2021 national plan for integrity and combating corruption. In addition, two months ago we submitted to the legislature a series of bills aimed at legal and political reform that also involve constitutional reforms, in which a few days ago our Congress expressed its confidence and its commitment to submitting for a referendum to be held on 9 December, involving the participation and decision-making of the entire citizenry through its vote.

I am pleased to announce that Peru is making progress towards its long-awaited political reforms and justice-system reforms through constitutional and participatory mechanisms that honour our commitments made at the Summit of the Americas in Lima. We believe that only joint efforts by the State authorities, along with transparency, accountability and citizens' participation can enable us to build the country we deserve. In that context, I would like to announce that Peru will promote the adoption of a draft resolution within the framework of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and its Conference of States Parties, aimed at strengthening the cooperation needed to combat that scourge, especially large-scale corruption and its transnational reach. We also want to promote a decisive effort by the Assembly aimed at encouraging all States to renew their political commitment to fight corruption and to explore new and more effective ways of combating it. Every year corruption diverts 5 per cent of the world's gross domestic product to enrich the few rather than directing those resources to effectively meeting the Sustainable Development Goals for the benefit of those who need it most.

With regard to climate change, it is clear that Peru is one of the world's most vulnerable countries in terms of climate change. Our people's primary natural asset is our great biodiversity, and changes in temperature and extreme climatic events such as droughts and heavy rains therefore make us particularly vulnerable. As a country we have worked hard to create a legal framework that ensures predictability for investments with high environmental and social standards through a focus on production, protection and inclusion. In order to combat climate change, we have to overcome poverty. We need responsible investments to continue growing because the poorest of our people are the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

I had the privilege, in one of my Government's first actions, to see a climate change framework law enacted with the aim of reducing our vulnerability to climate change and taking advantage of opportunities for growth through low-emission development. Furthermore, we are one of the few countries that has an action plan for both gender and climate change, because women are the most vulnerable of all. I would also like to point out that we all have a moral obligation to protect our planet for future generations and guarantee our citizens the right to a healthy environment. That is both my personal belief and a State policy, so I can assure the Assembly that Peru will continue to promote action at the national and international levels to effectively combat climate change.

As we work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which have already been incorporated into our national development plans, our primary responsibility is to achieve them with political determination and courage through the involvement of citizens and the private sector. We will also pay special attention to combating violence and discrimination against women. Our objective is to overcome the structural inequalities that women and girls suffer from in Peru, to guarantee their human rights and empower them to achieve their full development potential.

In an international context in which nationalist discourses promoting economic and commercial protectionism, discrimination and xenophobia are re-emerging, I believe it is necessary to reaffirm Peru's commitment to multilateralism and to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. As a member of the Security Council, Peru reaffirms its willingness to contribute to international peace and security, particularly through its active participation in peacekeeping operations. In that important body, we will continue to advocate for harmonious work based on international law and international humanitarian law. For a developing country like Peru, the United Nations represents a platform for shared action to achieve sustainable development, promote human rights

and address global challenges such as climate change, terrorism, the proliferation of weapons, systematic corruption and illicit drug trafficking.

I would like to express my country's commitment to free trade, which has enabled us to generate wealth, reduce poverty and make progress on sustainable development. We recognize the important role played by the World Trade Organization in ensuring the stability, predictability and transparency of the multilateral trading system. I invite every country to make the same commitment and to avoid protectionist measures, which, if implemented, will represent a setback both for developed countries and for those of us in the process of development.

With regard to democracy and human rights in our region, I would like to reaffirm our democratic orientation, which led us to head the process that resulted in the adoption of the Inter-American Democratic Charter in 2001. The Charter reflects the commitment of the countries of the Americas to defending democracy, respecting human rights and upholding fundamental freedoms in the region. That commitment encourages us to seek ways to help to re-establish the democratic order where necessary. That is why Peru condemns the breakdown of constitutional order in Venezuela. We will continue to promote initiatives to help restore democracy in our sister country within the framework of the Organization of American States, the Lima Group and in other multilateral forums. We reiterate our concern about and condemnation of the serious human rights violations in Venezuela denounced by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, which among other violations have reported extrajudicial killings. Peru has also filed a complaint with the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court with a view to punishing those responsible for the crimes committed in Venezuela.

My country expresses its unwavering solidarity with the Venezuelan people and calls for an urgent response to the serious humanitarian crisis in Venezuela, which has led to a flood of migrants and refugees throughout our region. My Government has taken steps to help to regulate the influx of the more than 450,000 Venezuelan migrants who have come to Peru in search of a decent future. However, the scope of the exodus is unprecedented in our region and requires a collective response from the international community.

I conclude by expressing our confidence in the potential of multilateralism, international law and the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes in responding to the challenges before us, promoting sustainable peace and development and guaranteeing the human rights of our citizens. Peru will continue to work constructively within the framework of the Organization to achieve the goals of the founding Charter of the United Nations.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Peru for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Martín Vizcarra Cornejo, President of the Republic of Peru, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

King Abdullah: It is an honour to take part in the general debate of the wonderful General Assembly once again.

The United Nations was born from the ashes of the Second World War, out of a deep desire to protect new generations from suffering, destruction and want. Today, those hopes still face challenges. Peace and stability have met threats in every region, too many people remain excluded from the promise of prosperity, and global terror continues to target all nations. Here in this Hall, I have called our current situation a third world war.

Those challenges do not make collective action and mutual respect less important; if anything, they make our partnership even more important, because what is the alternative? A world without the peace and

accord we need to work together, trade together and expand opportunity together? A world where crises are not resolved, but magnified? A world where violence spreads and more refugees flee, because we cannot work together to help people stay safe and thrive?

We have a long way to go to deliver global opportunity and hope, but we cannot simply give up because the task is hard. All our countries benefit when we unite in common cause. I am compelled to talk about this today, because of the critical role of collective action in ending the serious crises in my region, and especially the key crisis — the long denial of a Palestinian State.

Every United Nations resolution — whether from the General Assembly or the Security Council — since the beginning of the crisis recognizes the equal rights of the Palestinian people to a future of peace, dignity and hope. That is the heart of the two-State settlement and the only path to a comprehensive, lasting peace. Only a two-State solution based on international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions can meet the needs of both sides: an end to the conflict; a viable, independent, sovereign Palestinian State on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital; and a secure Israel, fully part of its own region, recognized by Arab and Muslim States around the world.

Arab and Muslim countries are committed to a comprehensive peace. The Arab Peace Initiative has been on offer for more than 16 years. Indeed, every major country in the world, the United Nations and the European Union all have worked to help the parties reach a durable peace that can last. The United States Administration has long been committed to peace and has a leading role in our progress going forward.

Yes, we have a long way to go. But we cannot give up because the task is hard, because what is the alternative? Can we afford to let one of the world's most strategic regions be tied to an endless cycle of violence in its midst? How long must Jerusalem, a city holy to more than half the world's people, face dangers to its multi-faith heritage and identity? How can we accept a status quo of continuing crises and bigotry? Palestinian families have been displaced for generations, their children's very identity denied, and Israeli families are living in continuing national self-isolation, without the security of peaceful relationships worldwide.

What could possibly be the future of the single, binational State that some propose, whose very foundation is a rejection of the equality of its own people? That is the ugly and undemocratic reality of the one-State idea. It is by no means an alternative to a two-State peace settlement. It is an abandonment of peace, a new way to go AWOL from the work of reconciliation and the opposite of what both sides need and have sought for so long.

There is no such thing as a unilateral agreement; it takes at least two parties to make an agreement. Helping the parties to achieve that agreement and work together to build a new future deserves the strong and steady support of all our world. Our countries need to pull together to get the peace process back on track. That means utterly rejecting actions that jeopardize negotiations, whether by illegal encroachments, land confiscations or threats to the welfare of innocents, especially children.

We need to support full funding of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and other vital efforts to protect families, keep communities stable and prepare young people for productive lives. It would be a terrible mistake to abandon youth to the forces of radicalization and despair. Such support is urgently needed to ensure that UNRWA fulfils its role, in accordance with its United Nations mandate.

Above all, we need to safeguard the heritage and peace of Jerusalem, a city holy to billions of people around the world. The Hashemite custodianship of Islamic and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem is a duty that Jordan is proud to carry, and we will counter any attempts to change the Holy City's historic Arab, Christian and Muslim identity. But Jerusalem's future is not Jordan's concern alone; it is the concern of all Member States. There are global implications when religious worship is threatened and international law is undermined.

Collective action is also vital when it comes to resolving other conflicts and crises that threaten our world. Jordan will continue to support all multilateral efforts to help Syria achieve a political solution that is based on the Geneva process and Security Council resolution 2254 (2015), in order to safeguard the country's unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity and to create the conditions for stability and rebuilding.

An effective global response to terror also requires continued collective action. Let us be clear about it: for all our victories, the fight against those outlaws, the

khawarij of Islam, is not over. Winning the war demands a long-term, holistic approach — one that pairs security measures with strong initiatives that support inclusion and hope. Offline and online, we must counter all — I say all — ideologies of hatred, including Islamophobia. Jordanians have led efforts to unite the world in mutual respect and understanding.

Finally, we must also strengthen our collective response to the global refugee crisis. As many here know, Jordan has carried a massive and disproportionate burden as a refugee host. Our people have opened their homes, schools, public services and hospitals. We have shared our country's scarce resources: our food, energy and precious water. The crisis has held back economic growth and job creation; jobs are urgently needed by our young people, who constitute more than 60 per cent of our population.

Jordanians have borne the refugee burden in full accordance with our country's long humanitarian traditions, but we know, and the world knows, that the crisis is a global responsibility. The sacrifices we and other host countries make every day can continue only if donor nations hold up their side of the partnership. That means making continued, multi-track efforts in development support and humanitarian assistance. Such efforts not only prepare refugees to return home and rebuild their countries, but also give hope to the people of host countries, who have sacrificed so much.

The world cannot address the refugee crisis or any global crisis unless we work together to support those who are doing the right thing for the future we all share. Peace and prosperity demand constant, collective action. The alternative is to fail our history and fail our future. Let us choose, instead, to succeed and give the world's people, especially young people, confidence in global justice, hope for new opportunity, and international laws, agreements and institutions that everyone can rely on.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for the statement he has just made.

His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the Emir of the State of Qatar.

His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Sheikh Al-Thani (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I wish to congratulate Her Excellency María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés on assuming the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session. We wish her every success. I also express our appreciation to His Excellency Miroslav Lajčák for his valuable efforts during the seventy-second session. We pay tribute also to the relentless efforts of Secretary-General António Guterres to promote the role of the United Nations and achieve its lofty goals.

I would like to express our sincere condolences to the family of Mr. Kofi Annan and to the United Nations on his passing. He was one of the most important symbols of the United Nations and a promoter of international cooperation, development and peace among nations.

The world faces serious security, political and economic threats and challenges that do not respect borders, which represents a real test for the collective security of the United Nations. If the international community wants to achieve international peace and security, we must go beyond crisis management and seek comprehensive and just solutions, in accordance with the provisions of international law and the resolutions of international legitimacy, while rejecting selectivity, double standards and policies of the imposition of force.

We recognize and appreciate the vital importance of having an international and comprehensive point of reference reflected in a legitimate international order that respects the rule of law. We must expedite the reform process of United Nations institutions in order to enable the Organization to shoulder its responsibilities, achieve its lofty goals and respond to the aspirations of peoples. That would enable us to bring about peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies, which is the theme

that the President of the General Assembly has chosen for this session.

More than a year after the illegal blockade imposed on the State of Qatar, many facts have been revealed about a pre-arranged campaign of incitement against it, as well as the insinuations and fabrications used to create the crisis. In the meantime, the international community also recognized the falseness of the allegations made against my country to justify the premeditated measures taken under the pretext of those fabricated and untrue allegations, in flagrant violation of international law and basic relations between nations, as well as the values and norms of our peoples.

Despite all the measures taken to undermine Qatar's security and stability and to create hardship for its people, in addition to the economic warfare launched to hinder its development process, the period that followed that unjust siege has witnessed the strengthening of the status of the State of Qatar and the consolidation of its role as an active partner in the regional and international arenas. Moreover, the Qatari economy has continued to grow, proof of its vigour and consistency. The State of Qatar has also maintained its advanced and leading rankings compared with other countries of the region in global indicators, especially in the areas of human security and human development. That has strengthened the Qatari people's faith in their potential, values and principles and increased their cohesion and unity.

Believing in the soundness of our legal position, in the need for the peaceful settlement of disputes and in dialogue as the best way to resolve crises, we have been, and remain, positively responsive to all the efforts of brotherly and friendly nations, which we appreciate, to end this crisis through unconditional dialogue, based on mutual respect for the sovereignty of nations.

It is not reasonable for differences of opinion on the handling of some regional issues to lead to paralysing the effectiveness of an important regional organization such as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). The blockade of Qatar has harmed the reputation of the GCC countries, and the paralysis of the GCC has reflected negatively on the role it aspires to play in dealing with regional and global issues. We hope that we will all be able to transform the current plight of the GCC into an opportunity for reform and to put forward binding mechanisms to resolve the differences among its States through dialogue, so as to avoid any similar recurrence in future.

It is not right that our Arab region remains hostage because of some marginal differences — fabricated, in our case — which consume efforts and energy and waste more funds than we allocate to the just causes upon which we are supposed to agree.

Little progress has been made on the lingering Middle East issues, especially the Palestinian question, which represents the last vestiges of our world's colonial past. The political process that began 25 years ago was an example of a departure from United Nations terms of reference to frameworks outside the Organization, which were perceived by some as the best and fastest way to settle and find solutions to that question. That process was supported by the Arab States and respectful of the Palestinian decision, but it has resulted in further stalemate and complexity. We are now witnessing attempts to eliminate the Palestinian question by disregarding issues relating to a permanent solution, such as those of Jerusalem, refugees, sovereignty and borders.

Just national issues cannot be resolved by becoming entangled in the balance of power between the occupier and the occupied. Such issues can be resolved only in accordance with certain principles, such as the right to self-determination and the inadmissibility of the annexation of territories of others by force, which have become part of international legitimacy.

The deterioration of the situation in the Palestinian territories, particularly the inhumane conditions in the Gaza Strip, the suffocating siege to which it is subjected and the continued construction of settlements in occupied Jerusalem and the West Bank, are having grave consequences and place a historic responsibility on the Security Council. We reaffirm the importance of negotiations, whose resumption is vital and which will require a commitment to resolutions of international legitimacy, foremost among which are the two-State solution and the Arab Peace Initiative, based on East Jerusalem as the capital of the Palestinian State, along the 1967 borders. Moreover, there can be no solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict without a just and lasting solution to the Palestinian question. We abide by that position, which is consistent with international legitimacy and morally just. However, Israel rejects such a just settlement.

The State of Qatar will spare no effort in providing various forms of material and political support to the brotherly Palestinian people and in continuing to work with all international actors involved in the Middle East peace process so as to overcome the difficulties that are obstructing the resumption of peace negotiations, in accordance with the terms of reference and resolutions of international legitimacy.

After more than seven years, the international community remains unable to find a solution to the worsening Syrian crisis in all its aspects and its dangerous consequences. The Syrian people, in addition to the tragedies they have experienced, are concerned and frustrated that the crimes of genocide, mass displacement and large-scale death in prisons, under torture, could become common practice and that the international community might get used to it.

Failure to deter the Syrian regime from committing crimes by waging a war against its own people, on the one hand, and failure to hold it accountable after the commission of such crimes, on the other, would render the provisions of international law and human rights law devoid of meaning. That would have serious consequences for the prevailing values of our world, as it would promote the use of violence as a means of suppressing peoples' aspirations and trampling on the rights of citizens and peoples of our region.

We are facing a humanitarian, moral and legal disaster that requires the international community to urgently reach a political solution that stops the Syrian bloodshed, fulfils Syrian aspirations to justice and freedom, maintains Syria's unity and sovereignty and achieves security and stability in Syria and the region, in accordance with the first Geneva communiqué (S/2012/522, annex) and the relevant Security Council resolutions. We emphasize the necessity of abiding by international humanitarian law and protecting civilians.

Regarding the Yemeni issue, we underscore that the firm position of the State of Qatar is to remain committed to the unity, independence and territorial integrity of Yemen. We call upon all Yemeni parties to achieve national reconciliation and end the conflict, on the basis of Security Council resolution 2216 (2015), the Initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the outcomes of the national dialogue. From this rostrum I appeal to States that are active in the international community to help the brotherly Yemeni people to overcome current conditions, which we hope will soon end, take all measures necessary to address the grave humanitarian situation and facilitate free access for humanitarian assistance to all areas of Yemen. In that regard, I wish to announce Qatar's agreement with the United Nations to fight cholera in Yemen by supporting projects related to combating the causes of the disease and to halting its spread. We call upon other countries to join us in supporting that vital effort.

Turning to the Libyan crisis, which has recently witnessed developments that place the country's security and territorial integrity at risk, we look forward to the restoration of security and stability despite the tremendous challenges facing our Libyan brothers. We note that foreign intervention in Libyan affairs further complicates the crisis, prevents the reaching of the national consensus that is sought by our Libyan brothers and contravenes Security Council resolutions. We reiterate our support for the Skhirat Agreement, signed in December 2015, and all its outcomes. We call upon all Libyan brothers to uphold the country's national interests and participate in a dialogue, without excluding any component of Libyan society, in order to reach a comprehensive political settlement that preserves Libya's sovereignty and territorial integrity and realizes the aspirations of its people to security and stability.

Turning to brotherly Iraq, we once again express our appreciation for the efforts of the Iraqi Government in restoring stability and achieving national reconciliation by cooperating with all political parties and components of the Iraqi society. We value the successes and sacrifices of the Iraqi people in the fight against terrorism and extremism in all its forms. We reaffirm our commitment to supporting brotherly Iraq in the process of its reconstruction and development and assisting in every effort to seek to ensure its unity and sovereignty and enhance its security and stability.

There is consensus that terrorism has become one of the most persistent challenges facing the world because of the real threat it poses to international peace and security. We underline the firm position of the State of Qatar in rejecting terrorism in all its forms and manifestations anywhere in the world, regardless of reason or pretext. The fight against terrorism is a priority of the State of Qatar's policy at the national, regional and international levels. We have developed legislative and institutional systems, fulfilled our international obligations related to the fight against terrorism and its

financing, and participated in all relevant international and regional efforts.

In our view, the following prerequisites are necessary to ensure that the war on terrorism achieves its goal and does not turn into a self-contained struggle. First, we need international cooperation in combating violence resulting from extremism and violence directed against civilians as a form of terror and aimed at damaging civilian facilities for political ends. Those phenomena must be addressed firmly and rigorously. Secondly, we must unify standards for fighting terrorism so that its definition is not selective and does not depend on the religious or ethnic identity of the perpetrator. Thirdly, we must address its root causes and research the political, social and cultural backgrounds that contribute to fuelling it while working earnestly to achieve the just settlement of outstanding issues that give rise to anger and frustration. Fourthly, we must avoid giving any partisan connotation to the term "terrorism" by tailoring it to fit into the narrow interests of some nations and using it to justify tyranny and the repression of political opponents, which affects the credibility of the combat against terrorism and undermines the international efforts made in that field.

With that in mind, the State of Qatar believes that educating young people and ensuring their comprehensive participation represents the first line of defence for the collective security system, as they are an important factor in fighting terrorism and building peace and stability. We have therefore committed to educating 10 million children and providing economic support to half a million young people in our region. In collaboration with the United Nations, we have carried out projects to promote employment opportunities for young people through capacity-building and have launched programmes to prevent violent extremism.

Human development and the protection and promotion of human rights are at the forefront of our priorities. The State of Qatar is pursuing efforts at the legislative and institutional levels to implement its 2030 national vision, which emphasizes human development. This month, the State of Qatar acceded to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The State of Qatar recently enacted a law regulating the issue of political asylum in the country, following the steps of developed countries, and another law granting the right to permanent residence in the State under conditions prescribed by law. It has also decided to invite several international human rights organizations to establish regional offices in our country.

No one doubts the importance of the development of information and digital technology and digital means of communication. The economy and day-to-day life would be inconceivable without them. However, a series of recent events in several countries have reminded us that new needs are emerging, such as the need for freedom of access and the need to protect the private lives of citizens from the risk of hacking. It also alerted us to the cybersecurity of nations, which is a cross-border issue because of the nature of the technology itself.

Accordingly, we must regulate how those issues are dealt with and control their risks internationally. Qatar and other countries have suffered from digital piracy and digital espionage, which has prompted us to strongly emphasize the issue. We are willing to work with United Nations bodies to devise legal regulations. In that regard, we propose the convening of an international conference to examine means of regulation in that area by international law, and we express our readiness to host such a conference.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Emir of the State of Qatar for the statement he has just made.

His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Hassan Rouhani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Hassan Rouhani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Hassan Rouhani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Rouhani (*spoke in Farsi; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): I take this

opportunity to congratulate you, Madam, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session.

We have assembled here today as the world is suffering from the recklessness of and disregard by some States for international values and institutions. We are here because the preservation of interests and security in the world in the least costly manner is possible only through the cooperation of and coordination among countries. However, it is unfortunate that we are seeing rulers in the world who think that they can better secure their own interests, and who, at least in the short term, ride public sentiment and gain popular support by fomenting extremist nationalism, racism and xenophobic tendencies that resemble a Nazi disposition, while trampling global norms and undermining international institutions, even through preposterous and anomalous acts such as convening a high-level meeting of the Security Council.

The illusion that one can aspire to securing greater peace and security at the cost of denying others that same peace and security should be cast aside once and for all. We should not allow any breathing space for or the development of a line of thinking that holds others to ransom through the artificial creation of insecurity. In that regard, confronting multilateralism is not a sign of strength; rather, it is the symptom of intellectual weakness and betrays an inability to understand a complex and interconnected world.

Under such circumstances, the negligence or inefficacy of international institutions can endanger world peace. Those seeking dominance and hegemony are enemies of peace and are the perpetrators of war. The Government of the United States of America — at least the current Administration — seems determined to render all international institutions ineffectual. That Government, having withdrawn from a multilateral agreement adopted by the Security Council, in contravention of the rules and norms of international law, has invited the Islamic Republic of Iran to bilateral talks. The Administration that is inviting Iran to engage in talks is not ready to consult its own experts or willing to recognize the requirements of a modern State, including the paramount principle of the continuity of State responsibility and, therefore, is openly violating the State obligations undertaken by its predecessor.

On what basis and criteria can we enter into an agreement with an Administration that is guilty of such misconduct? Any talks should take place within the framework and in continuation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and Security Council resolution 2231 (2015), and not within a framework of breaching such agreements and reverting to the past. It is ironic that the United States Government is not even concealing its plan to overthrow the same Government that it is inviting to talks.

The approach of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the field of foreign policy has been based on multilateralism and compliance with the recognized principles of international law. Our respect for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the long and difficult negotiations with the five plus one group, which led to the conclusion of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, is a clear illustration of that approach.

We are pleased that the international community did not acquiesce to the United States Government's unilateral and illegal withdrawal from the JCPOA and adopted a categorical position vis-à-vis that decision. The JCPOA was the outcome of more than a decade of diplomatic efforts and a period of intensive negotiations to resolve an artificial crisis. It was unanimously approved through the adoption of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) and codified into an international obligation. The resolution calls on all countries and international and regional organizations to support the implementation of the JCPOA and refrain from any actions that would undermine the implementation of commitments under the JCPOA.

According to 12 consecutive reports of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Iran has thus far complied with all of its commitments. However, from the very beginning, the United States did not honour its obligations. The current Administration, resorting to flimsy excuses and in open violation of its commitments, finally withdrew from the accord. The United Nations should not allow its decisions to fall victim to the domestic elections and propaganda games of some of its Members and should not allow any Member State to dodge the execution of its international commitments.

Moreover, the United States also pressures other countries to violate the nuclear accord. More dangerously, the United States is threatening all countries and international organizations with punishment if they comply with Security Council resolution 2231 (2015). It is the first time in the history of the United Nations that such a general invitation

to violate the law has been coupled with threatening law-abiders with punishment. That is not unique to the JCPOA; it is a pattern that even applies to the United States approach to the International Criminal Court.

We appreciate the efforts of the international community, the European Union, Russia and China in supporting the implementation of the JCPOA and for considering the full realization of the commitments stipulated in it a precondition for the survival of that significant accomplishment of diplomacy.

Unlawful unilateral sanctions constitute a form of economic terrorism and a breach of the right to development. The economic war that the United States has initiated under the rubric of new sanctions not only targets the Iranian people, but will also have harmful repercussions for the people of other countries. Moreover, that war has caused a disruption to the state of global trade.

The Iranian people have demonstrated their unwavering resilience over the past 40 years, despite the difficulties and constraints caused by sanctions, and have also shown that they can overcome such difficult periods. The multi-millennial history of our country demonstrates that Iran and Iranians have never broken in the face of a storm — not even been bowed.

I state here, in clear, unambiguous terms, that the United States policy vis-à-vis the Islamic Republic of Iran has been wrong from the beginning, and its approach of resisting the wishes of the Iranian people, as manifested in numerous elections, is doomed to fail. Iran, with its historical and civilizational longevity, rich cultural heritage and foremost geopolitical position is an undeniable reality. Policies of engagement and cooperation with Iran have produced positive outcomes for other nations, as best reflected in Iran's cooperation with friendly countries in the fight against terrorism.

The United States understanding of international relations is authoritarian. In its estimation, might makes right. Its understanding of power, not of legal and legitimate authority, is reflected in its bullying and imposition. No State or nation can be brought to the negotiating table by force and, if so, what follows is an accumulation of the grapes of wrath in those nations, which is later reaped by the oppressors.

We concur that ultimately there is no better alternative to dialogue. However, dialogue is two-way; it should be based on equality, justice and human integrity and honour and conducted in accordance with the rules and norms of international law. Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) is not merely a piece of paper. We invite the United States to return to that resolution and come back to the negotiating table it left. If the United States dislikes the JCPOA because it is the legacy of its domestic political rivals, then we invite it to return to that Security Council resolution. We invite that country to remain in international institutions and implore it not to engage in imposing sanctions. Sanctions and extremism are two sides of the same coin. Extremism involves negating the thinking of others, and sanctions negate the life and prosperity of people.

For dialogue to take place, there is no need for a photo opportunity. The two sides can listen to each other right here in the Assembly. I am starting the dialogue right here and state, in unequivocal terms, that the question of international security is not a toy for American domestic politics. The United Nations is not a part of the United States Administration. Dialogue can resume in the Assembly from the same point at which it stopped and by the same person who left the dialogue table and walked away from the accord. Beginning that dialogue starts with the ending of threats and unjust sanctions that negate the principles of ethics and international law.

Our proposal is clear: commitment for commitment, violation for violation, threat for threat and step for step, instead of talk for talk. What Iran is saying is clear: no war, no sanctions, no threats and no bullying, just acting in accordance with the law and the fulfilment of obligations. We support peace and democracy in the entire Middle East. We consider nuclear knowledge an imperative and nuclear weapons prohibited.

As victims of terrorism in the past and today, we have always been and will always remain at the forefront of genuine confrontation of terrorism. Today we mourn the martyrdom of the dozens of innocent people who were murdered on Saturday in cold blood by terrorists who shamelessly accepted responsibility from a number of Western capitals for their heinous crime in interviews with Western-based broadcasting outfits that are financed by petrodollars.

We in Iran have unequivocally condemned all acts of terrorism and will continue to do so. We welcome the strong statement from the Security Council on this issue. But why can the leaders of those terrorist

operations, including the organization that has publicly claimed responsibility for Saturday's crime, live and operate freely in Western countries, and even openly solicit funds? Are those activities not in violation of international counter-terrorism norms? Why have the official State financiers of anti-Iranian terrorist organizations, with their record of financing Al-Qaida, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham and the Al-Nusra Front, not only been spared any punishment but are also supported and armed? If the United States wants the world's public to take its claim of fighting terrorism seriously, it is imperative that it start a joint global campaign to fight that scourge, irrespective of the victims or culprits.

In that regard, from the very beginning of the crisis in Syria we have warned against any foreign intervention in the internal affairs of that country and the use of unlawful means, including supporting extremist and terrorist groups, in order to exert pressure on the Government of Syria. We have consistently emphasized that the crisis can be resolved only through intra-Syrian dialogue. To that end, the presence of our military advisers in Syria has been at the request of the Syrian Government, is consistent with international law and has aimed to assist the Syrian Government in combating extremist terrorism. Iran, Russia and Turkey, in cooperation with the Government of Syria and other Syrian parties, have succeeded through the Astana process, the third summit meeting of which took place in Tehran earlier this month, in playing a positive role and reducing tension in Syria. Their last joint effort prevented escalation and bloodshed in the Idlib region.

We have witnessed a tragic humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen over the past three years, which has caused the destruction of infrastructure, the death and injury of hundreds of thousands of people, the displacement of millions of innocent civilians, widespread famine and chronic disease. Those inhumane acts represent clear examples of crimes against humanity and war crimes. The crisis in Yemen can be resolved only through intra-Yemeni talks and without foreign interference. To that end, we are ready to assist in any possible way.

The most pressing crisis in the Middle East, however, is the question of Palestine. The passage of time cannot, and must not, justify occupation. The innumerable crimes of Israel against the Palestinians would not have been possible without the material and military assistance and political and propaganda support of the United States. Israel, equipped with a nuclear arsenal and blatantly threatening others with nuclear annihilation, presents the most daunting threat to regional and global peace and stability. The abhorrent United States decision to transfer its Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem and the recent enactment of the racist Jewish State law are violations of international law and norms, as well as unmistakable manifestations of apartheid.

The expansion of relations with neighbours and the creation of a more secure and more developed region are among the main priorities of Iran's foreign policy. A few weeks ago Iran, along with the other four coastal States of the region, signed the Convention on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea, which will strengthen good-neighbourliness and bring about prosperity and progress for all of the coastal States.

We also desire the same relations with our southern neighbours in the Persian Gulf. We believe in the formation of a collective mechanism for the Persian Gulf region, with the presence and participation of all regional countries. The security of the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz has always been important for us and, just as we upheld their security during the war imposed on us by Iraq, we will confront any disruptive effort regarding that critical waterway in the future.

We espouse a peaceful view on political and international issues and have not sought, and do not seek, war with any country. Iran does not need an empire. Iran is an empire in terms of civilization and culture, not through political domination. Iran has served as the link between East and West and will continue to do so, remaining a meticulous guardian for a world free from violence.

Mr. Boukadoum (Algeria), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is the same State that understood the fascist nature of the Ba'athist regime in Iraq before anyone else in the world and bravely resisted its aggression against us. We fought against the Ba'ath Party of Iraq before it occupied Kuwait. The Islamic Republic of Iran is the same State that was at the forefront of the struggle against Taliban terrorism and gave up martyrs in that struggle. We fought against Al-Qaida and the Taliban before the attacks on New York and Washington, D.C. The Islamic Republic of Iran is the same State that fought against Da'esh, a fake, distorted representation of Islam. We were engaged in

the fight against Da'esh before its operations in Paris, London and Brussels.

Appreciate those historical realities regarding Iran, stop imposing sanctions and end extremism. The world does not have a better friend than Iran, if peace is what it seeks.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Hassan Rouhani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Sauli Niinistö, President of the Republic of Finland

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Finland.

Mr. Sauli Niinistö, President of the Republic of Finland, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Sauli Niinistö, President of the Republic of Finland, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Niinistö: I wish to start by paying tribute to Secretary-General António Guterres for his vision in leading the United Nations. Finland wholeheartedly supports him in his important task.

My country has always been a strong advocate of multilateral cooperation. For Finland, the rules-based international order is of fundamental importance. At home, being able to rely on commonly agreed rules is a cornerstone of our own national security and welfare. At the global level, common solutions and rules are needed to address the most pressing challenges of our time.

Unfortunately, for those of us who believe in the benefits of multilateralism, there is now reason to be worried. The international system that we have built together is under pressure and its capability and credibility are being questioned. We can no longer take the rules-based order for granted. It is our common responsibility to actively defend and develop it.

Finland sees the United Nations as the core of the multilateral system. The defence of multilateralism must therefore begin here. The United Nations and its Members need to show their will to act together, not past each other. We fully support the Secretary-General's ambitious and comprehensive reform agenda. Now is the time to implement those reforms. We must ensure that the United Nations of the future is more transparent, accountable and efficient.

For the United Nations to be credible, it has to practice what it preaches. For any organization, every single case of sexual exploitation in its own ranks is one case too much. That is particularly true for an organization that stresses the importance of equality and human rights. I am proud to be a member of the Circle of Leadership on Preventing and Responding to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, and I welcome the efforts taken to prevent and combat all forms of abuse throughout the United Nations system.

The three pillars of the United Nations — peace and security, human rights and development — have stood the test of time. However, we have also discovered that many present global challenges do not respect the boundaries among them. The pillars are increasingly interlinked, as are the challenges themselves. The most important achievements of the United Nations system in recent years are testimony to that. In that regard, I refer to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement and the global compact for migration and the global compact on refugees. Issues such as sustainability, climate change and migration are not only about development and human rights, but they are also essential questions of peace and security.

Climate change is the prime example of the need for prompt global action. The upcoming report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change will further underscore the urgency of our response. It will also show how much remains to be done. So far, the voluntary contributions from the States parties to the Paris Agreement are not enough to keep the global temperature rise well below 2°C. We must do a lot more, and more quickly.

In the North, we are witnessing how the Arctic region is warming at an alarming pace. That is not just a regional problem, as it poses a threat to the entire global climate system. One important factor in accelerating the melting of sea ice in the Arctic is black carbon emissions. Reducing black carbon that lands on the white ice would have immediate positive effects in preventing melting. A commitment to curbing

those emissions would be a key objective of an Arctic summit, which Finland, as the current Chair of the Arctic Council, is ready to host.

Without mitigation, climate change will also lead to a further increase in migration flows. Approximately 65 million people across the world are already displaced, the highest figure since the Second World War. About 100 million people worldwide are in urgent need of basic humanitarian assistance, and that number is growing. There are no quick and easy solutions, but doing nothing is not an option. I therefore welcome the global compact for migration and look forward to participating in the conference to adopt it in Marrakesh in December.

Full-scale wars, conflicts of varying intensity and breaches of international law continue to haunt us. They constantly remind us of the immense human suffering involved. We, the international community, need to remain persistent in our efforts to solve ongoing conflicts, regardless of how deep-rooted and long-lasting they may be.

On a positive note, we have been encouraged by recent attempts to hold a genuine dialogue between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the international community. The momentum to take steps towards a peaceful Korean peninsula should be maintained and supported. A successful outcome in that region could also set a powerful example for non-proliferation and disarmament elsewhere.

Where peace has been achieved, the relevance of United Nations peacekeeping remains beyond doubt. But the Blue Helmets will also need to adapt to changing realities. We support the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative to make United Nations peacekeeping more effective.

While existing conflicts need to be solved, our priority must be to prevent future ones. Finland welcomes the efforts to strengthen the United Nations conflict-prevention capacity. Mediation is an invaluable tool when it comes to conflict prevention. It is vital for the future of mediation that experience gained in the past be passed on to future mediators. It was an honour for my country to host the meeting of the Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Board on Mediation in June. We remain strong supporters of the mediation activities of the United Nations and other actors. Where appropriate, Finland also continues to offer its good offices to facilitate concrete discussions among parties, from track-two diplomacy to high-level meetings.

Peace and security, human rights and development are not sustainable without the participation of women and youth. Female voices and young voices must be heard and acted upon. The needs of women, children and youth are still all too often marginalized in peace talks. Finland promotes the role of women's effective participation in peace processes through the Nordic Women Mediator's Network. That and other similar networks provide a useful platform for advocacy and self-education. As a HeForShe Impact Champion, I highly value those efforts.

As we celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, its importance in the international order deserves special attention. Human rights not only protect the individual, but they also help us to prevent conflicts, build sustained peace and speed up development. If we are serious about human rights, then accountability mechanisms for crimes against international law are needed. Perpetrators must be brought to justice. Finland appeals to all Member States and the Secretary-General to consistently keep human rights, non-discrimination and gender equality at the top of the agenda of the United Nations.

It was with profound sadness that I learned of the passing of Mr. Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations. His legacy is an inspiration to us all. Like the Secretary-General earlier today, I would like to conclude by remembering the following words from him:

> "More than ever before in human history, we share a common destiny. We can master it only if we face it together. And that, my friends, is why we have the United Nations".

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Finland for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Sauli Niinistö, President of the Republic of Finland, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Buhari: On behalf of the Government and the people of Nigeria, I congratulate Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés on her well-deserved election as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session. As she embarks upon her assignment, I would like to assure her of Nigeria's support in no less measure than that which we extended to her predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Miroslav Lajčák. We appreciate his effective leadership of the General Assembly at its seventy-second session, his dedication, commitment and the fairness with which he treated all Member States. I also salute our Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, who has steered the affairs of the Secretariat with a focused commitment to the collective United Nations pursuits of global peace and security, equity and justice, inclusiveness, women's empowerment and human rights.

It is appropriate at this point to remember with deep sadness our late seventh Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, who passed away on the eve of his eighty-second birthday. Kofi Annan's significant contributions to the work of the Organization have been acknowledged in the well-deserved tributes that poured in from around the world following his death. We in Africa, while mourning the loss of this great son of ours and citizen of the world, take pride in the way he served humankind in a truly exemplary manner. He demonstrated in his calm but determined manner the virtues of compassion, dedication to the cause of justice, fairness and human rights. He was a visionary leader who inspired hope, even in the face of the most daunting challenges. He devoted his entire life's career to the United Nations and the pursuit of its ideals and goals. The world is indeed a better place thanks to his exemplary service.

During the past year, the world saw some positive results and encouraging signs from the bilateral and multilateral efforts of the international community in addressing conflicts, crises and threats to world peace. We particularly commend the efforts of the leaders of the United States, North Korea and South Korea in making headway towards our shared goal of a nuclear-free Korean peninsula. In that connection, we acknowledge the commitment to peace shown by President Donald Trump and Chairman Kim Jong Un by initiating a historic summit. We urge them to continue that positive engagement.

Regrettably, many of the crises and threats to peace and security around the world, on which we debated last year and several previous years, remain unresolved. In some cases, matters have deteriorated. The continuing plight of the Rohingyas in Myanmar, the protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the wars in Yemen and Syria and the fight against international and local terrorism, such as Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab, come to mind. The terrorist insurgencies that we face, particularly in the Sahel and the Lake Chad basin, are partly fuelled by local factors and dynamics, but now increasingly by the international jihadi movement, runaway fighters from Iraq and Syria and arms from the disintegration of Libya.

Fortunately, the carnage appears to have somewhat abated in Myanmar. We commend the United Nations for staying focused on the situation of the Rohingya people in order to bring their suffering to an end and hold to account the perpetrators of the atrocious crimes committed against innocent and vulnerable members of that community, including women, children and the elderly. The international community should strengthen its resolve to combat ethnic and religious cleansing everywhere. We support the United Nations efforts in ensuring that the Rohingya refugees are allowed to return to their homes in Myanmar with security, protection and a guarantee of citizenship. We note the indication by the Government of Myanmar of its willingness to address those issues, and we encourage it to do so expeditiously. In that context, Nigeria commends the Government and the people of Bangladesh in particular, and all other countries and organizations that have contributed to shouldering the burden of providing shelter and other vital assistance to the Rohingya refugees.

The carnage and the worsening humanitarian situations in Syria and Yemen continue unabated. But the international community cannot afford to give up on the Syrian and Yemeni peoples. We must pursue all efforts to find peaceful negotiated political solutions to those wars, which cannot be won by the force of arms alone. Regarding Syria, we hope that the United

Nations-sponsored Geneva process and the Sochi initiative, led by Russia, Iran, and Turkey, can advance that objective. The international community must keep up the pressure to encourage the parties to pursue the path of dialogue, negotiations and inclusiveness in resolving their sectarian divides and bringing to an end the immense human suffering in Syria, as well as in Yemen. We commend Turkey, Jordan, Greece, Germany, Italy and France for hosting the millions of the refugees fleeing those brutal conflicts.

The situation in the Middle East, as grave as it has always been, is now worsened by developments since we last met (see A/72/PV.3). Nigeria continues to call on the Israelis and the Palestinians to make the necessary compromises in the interests of justice, peace and security, in line with numerous United Nations resolutions and applicable international law. Unilateral, arbitrary and insensitive actions only prolong the conflict and undermine world peace and security. The deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza is an appalling result of the unrestrained use of power. We urge both parties to re-engage in dialogue on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, the Madrid principles, the Quartet road map and the Arab Peace Initiative, among others. Nigeria reaffirms its unwavering support for a just two-State solution, negotiated without intimidation and with Israel and Palestine existing side-by-side in peace and security. The crises in the Middle East have deep roots and have remained unresolved for too long. Yet we should not fall into self-defeating despair and conclude that they are not amenable to solution.

We should draw inspiration from the remarkable leadership that motivated Ethiopia and Eritrea to restore long-lost hope for peace between them, a remarkable show of statesmanship that has now galvanized neighbouring countries, including Djibouti and Somalia, to push for peace in the subregion. I believe that with hard work, commitment and a disposition to compromise and make the necessary sacrifices, peace is achievable in the Middle East as well. Most crises usually have a variety of festering causes and effects. It is the failure to address them early and effectively that lead to out-of-control conflicts. Addressing them includes national and international collective actions that have a positive impact on peoples and communities. Therefore, "Making the United Nations relevant to all people: global leadership and shared responsibilities for peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies", which is the theme for this year's General Assembly, is very apt indeed.

A topical consequence of the current conflicts around the world is the irregular migration of affected people from the Middle East, Afghanistan and Africa to Europe. Irregular migration entails huge avoidable loss of human lives, puts strains on services in host countries and communities and fuels anti-immigrant and racist sentiments in Europe. That is why we welcome the successful conclusion of the negotiations on the first-ever global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. We look forward to its adoption in Marrakech later this year. The aim is to protect the rights of migrants worldwide while addressing the concerns of countries of origin, transit and destination alike. Migration is a constant in human affairs. We in Africa are grateful to countries that treat migrants with compassion and humanity, notably Germany, Italy and France. Irregular migration is not a consequence of conflicts alone, but of the effects of climate change and the lack of opportunities at home. Climate change remains one of the greatest challenges of our time. Very close to us at home, it is our lot in Nigeria, together with our neighbours around the Lake Chad basin, to live with the climate change consequences of a drastically shrunken Lake Chad and the parching up of otherwise fertile arable lands.

Lake Chad was a major source of livelihood for the more than 45 million inhabitants of the region. Its shrinking has meant the loss of such livelihoods, and the region's inhabitants have been impoverished and made vulnerable to the activities of extremists and terrorist groups. The instability caused in the subregion has intensified internal displacements, leading, among other consequences, to intense economic competition, especially between farmers and herdsmen. That is why we continue to call for dedicated international engagement to accelerate recovery efforts in the Lake Chad basin to address the root causes of the conflicts in the region. What is required is continuous and robust United Nations cooperation with national Governments and subregional and regional organizations, such as the Lake Chad Basin Commission, the Economic Community of West African States and the African Union, to enhance capacity in conflict prevention, conflict management and peacebuilding.

With regard to the Lake Chad basin plight, I extend our heartfelt appreciation to the United Nations, the Governments of Germany, Norway, the United States,

Sweden, the United Kingdom and France and a host of other development partners for their laudable support in assisting us in addressing both the humanitarian challenges and the ongoing stabilization drive in the region.

Corruption within countries and the illicit flow of funds across national boundaries have a huge negative impact on the stability, peace and economic prospects of millions in developing countries. Corruption significantly deprives national Governments of resources to provide meaningful livelihoods for their populations, who are predominantly young people, thereby giving rise to more irregular migration. The fight against corruption therefore involves us all. It is in our collective interest to cooperate in tracking illicit financial flows, investigate and prosecute corrupt individuals and entities and repatriate such funds to their countries of origin. Fighting corruption and resolving international conflicts, crises and wars; defeating terrorism and piracy; curbing arms trafficking and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, which fuel such conflicts, in particular in Africa; stemming irregular migration by addressing its root causes; and the many other global challenges we are faced with today can be effectively addressed only through multilateral cooperation and concerted action.

The only global institutional framework we have to address those challenges is the United Nations system. That is why we continue to call for the strengthening of the Organization to make it more effective by speeding up the pace of progress towards its reform, including that of its principal organ, the Security Council. The reconstitution of the Council to make it more equitable and more representative of our global community is both a political and moral imperative. We believe that a reformed Security Council, with expanded membership in both the permanent and non-permanent categories, is in accord with prevailing international consensus and it is in our collective interest to do so. It is high time we stop skirting around the issue and establish achievable benchmarks and time frames for such reforms.

I assure all members that in such advocacy I am only reflecting Nigeria's deep and abiding commitment to our Organization and its founding principles and goals. From the day we joined in 1960, we have contributed our quota to the fulfilment of the mandate of the United Nations. We have been active participants in many Security Council- and African Union-authorized peacekeeping operations around the world, beginning with the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1960. Furthermore, Nigeria has always mobilized the required human and material resources to achieve certain United Nations goals, including the recently adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We are resolute in complementing the efforts and examples of the United Nations to promote gender equality and youth empowerment as necessary pillars for sustainable development.

Without such efforts there can be neither enduring peace nor security. As we craft and implement our national policies to achieve the goals set, we, in the spirit of international solidarity, will readily cooperate with other nations seeking to achieve similar goals for their own populations to help ensure that no one is left behind.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of South Africa.

Mr. Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Ramaphosa: I have the honour to address the General Assembly for the first time as President of the Republic of South Africa.

It is nearly a quarter of a century since the founding father of our democracy, President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, stood at this rostrum to declare that

> "The millions across our globe who stand expectant at the gates of hope look to this Organization to bring them peace, to bring them

life, to bring them a life worth living." (*A/49/PV.14, p. 10*)

As we mark the centenary of the birth of this great global leader, Nelson Mandela, we are bound to ask whether the United Nations has met the needs and expectations of the millions who stand at the gates of hope. We are bound to ask what contribution the United Nations has made to a more peaceful, more prosperous and more equal world. More important, we are called upon to ask — as we did yesterday during the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit (see A/73/PV.5), which was held here — what the United Nations and the assembled global leadership must do to secure lasting peace, reconciliation and stability across the globe.

Allow me to express the deep gratitude of the Government and the people of South Africa to the international community for convening the Peace Summit to honour the memory of Nelson Mandela and advance his legacy. We applaud the political declaration of the Summit (resolution 73/1), which recognizes the period from 2019 to 2028 as the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace. It reflects a new and sincere commitment by the world's leaders to comprehensively advance peace and security and resolve all conflicts and wars. To succeed in giving effect to that commitment, the United Nations must become what billions of people across the world want it to be, that is, a representative and truly democratic global parliament of the people of the world.

Throughout its seven decades, the United Nations has been a source of hope for the oppressed, exploited and poor around the world. During the dark days of colonialism and apartheid, we drew strength, inspiration and encouragement from the United Nations and its Charter in our quest for freedom and self-determination. With the support of the United Nations, 24 years ago, we as South Africans were able to bring an end to the nightmare of apartheid. Nelson Mandela led us to freedom and gave us the great opportunity to transform our country. We have now embarked upon a journey of transformation and are making progress to deal with the ugly legacy of the past system of apartheid.

Madiba's vision continues to guide us as we seek to improve the lives of our people in many respects, among others, by improving educational outcomes for our youth and transforming our economy, which was constituted to serve the interests of a few. We have started a comprehensive dialogue on the question of land reform in our country, which is guided by our Constitution and the rule of law, as we seek ways to ensure that the land is shared among all who work it, as set out in our Freedom Charter. Even as our country is experiencing difficult economic challenges, we have made progress. We are reforming our economy and creating an environment that is conducive to investment and have embarked upon an investment drive to attract $100 billion in the next five years. To the poor, vulnerable and marginalized, the United Nations today is a beacon of promise in a landscape of doubt. To billions across the world, the United Nations is the most powerful instrument we possess to achieve a more equal, humane and inclusive world.

There are men and women with dreams and aspirations that transcend the hardships of the present, who want to contribute to a new global civilization defined by care, justice and solidarity. They want an end to the greed, ignorance and conceit that is driving the destruction of our only home, the Earth. It is within our ability, as the leaders assembled here today, to forge a more representative, equal and fair United Nations that is empowered and equipped to lead the struggle to end poverty, unemployment and inequality in the world.

We are a youthful world: more than half the global population is under the age of 30. That is even more pronounced on our continent of Africa, where two thirds of our people were not yet born when Nelson Mandela was released from 27 years in prison. We are living in the age of youth. That places a responsibility on us as leaders not only to put the interests of young people at the centre of our efforts, but also to empower women and young people to be more prominent in directing the course of global affairs. It is young people who are fighting the wars that we started. It is women who are bearing the brunt and hardships of the wars that continue to destroy their lives and their families. As we speak, young lives are being lost and futures are being destroyed.

There is an urgency to the measures we must take to end conflict and war. Not only must we stop the death, destruction and human suffering that is visited daily on millions of people, but we must act with purpose to prevent the loss of another entire generation to its aftermath. We must accept our shared responsibility for, and our shared interests in, ending conflict and using the outcomes of the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit to empower the United Nations to be a more effective instrument for mediation, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction.

Our resolve to end ongoing conflicts and our determination to root out terrorism must be matched by action and the appropriate deployment of resources. We must act with the same urgency to resolve some of the world's most protracted and intractable disputes. The fact that the people of Palestine have endured occupation and suffering for nearly as long as the United Nations has existed makes their plight no less pressing and their suffering no more acceptable. We must likewise intensify our efforts to secure the right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination and full national sovereignty.

One of the greatest challenges to the achievement of global prosperity and development is the continued exclusion of millions of women and young people from meaningful economic participation. It is therefore vital that we deploy all the means at our disposal to address youth unemployment and ensure universal access to educational opportunities appropriate to the changing world of work. We need a deliberate programme to ensure that the digital revolution, which carries such great potential for both disruption and empowerment, is effectively harnessed to promote social justice as well as human progress. The call to leave no one behind requires that we strengthen the institutions of global governance and make them more responsive to the needs of young people, particularly in the developing world.

Institutions such as the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization need to be reshaped and enhanced so that they may more effectively meet the challenges of the contemporary world and better serve the interests of the poor and marginalized around the globe. Reform of the United Nations, and of the Security Council in particular, must be a priority if we are to give full effect to the values and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

We must resist any and all efforts to undermine the multilateral approach to international trade, which is essential to the promotion of stability and predictability in the global economy. The history of the global economy informs us that no country can prosper at the expense of all others and that no people can hope to live in comfort and security as long as millions of others languish in poverty.

It is therefore essential that we take collective responsibility for the development of all nations and for the improvement of the lives of all people. That responsibility is manifest in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, among other agreements. Together they represent our common commitment to tackle poverty, underdevelopment and environmental degradation. They represent our common commitment to tackle diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, diabetes and cancer. Our task as global leaders is to pursue the policies required to turn intent into implementation and mobilize the resources needed to turn implementation into impact.

We have made significant strides as Africans in addressing the challenges that have confronted our continent for many decades. We continue vigorously to implement our commitments set out in the African Union Agenda 2063, which is our collective plan as Africans to rid our continent of under-development, poverty and conflict and to improve democratic governance, the rule of law and the promotion of human rights. We have recently reached agreement on the establishment of an African Continental Free Trade Area, which will fundamentally transform African economies, giving rise to a new industrial age on the continent. We are working to silence the guns in Africa by 2020, to bring an end to conflicts that have cost the lives of millions of our people, displaced more and stunted economic growth and human development.

As the continent with the youngest population in the world, Africa has the potential to be the next great frontier for global growth and development. With effective investment in education, improved health care, good governance and greater economic integration, Africa has the potential to develop its productive capacity on a scale and at a rate that will lift tens of millions out of poverty. The youth of Africa are poised to transform their continent.

We the people of South Africa are committed to being part of that transformation. From the ashes of a system that was described by the General Assembly as a crime against humanity, we are building a new, democratic nation united in its diversity. We are working to correct the injustices of our past and to build a society that is free, inclusive and sustainable. We are pursuing an economic path that draws on the resources and capabilities of all our people to eradicate poverty, unemployment and inequality. We are determined through our international relations to be a force for progress, good, peace and global equality, and

will continue to advance the interests of the African continent and the global South.

Allow me to conclude by once more drawing on the wisdom of Nelson Mandela, who said, "Sometimes it falls on a generation to be great." This is not the generation that will stand expectant at the gates of hope; this is the generation that will change the world. It is the generation of young people who want to see change. This is their time and this is their age. Let their greatness blossom.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of South Africa for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

The meeting rose at 3.25 p.m.